

Dragazine

THE MAGAZINE FOR HALLOWEENERS AND INBETWEENERS

Spring-Summer 1996 #9

Mr. Dan & Paul V.
Sherry Vine
Eartha Madre
Holly Woodlawn
Battle For The Tiara
AND MORE.....

JACKIE BEAT

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—Maxxi Padd, Genre Drag Liason



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EDIE TORIAL MESSAGE

If you're a drag enthusiast or just a tourist (and who isn't one or the other?), Dragazine invites you to dish with us! For those of you who are into 'recreational transvestism,' to others who are on the edge of the Gender Bell Curve, Dragazine is for you! It's a Whole 'Nother World!

XO Lois Commondenominator

Dragazine

Since 1991

NO. 9

INSIDE

Dragazine
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Multi-talented performer sez yo!



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About our fierce ruling cover photo... The Unsinkable Jackie Beat
Photo: Greg Gorman. About our fierce back cover... Battle for the Tiara contestant Lasagna Buttafuccho de-wigged but not de-clawed. Photo: John Paschal.

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Media Notes

The Drag Beat by Lois Commondenominator

Is Rosie O'Donnell caving in to right wing 'family values' pressures? She recently vowed never to feature **'Transvestite Nuns'** on her new talk show scheduled for Spring '96. Perhaps it's just backlash due to Drag's overexposure, or perhaps the soaps are winning the ratings war with beefcake in the afternoon to the delight of homebound housewives (and househusbands!). Whichever it is Rosie, missing the Drag perspective would be a shame. The viewing public might never hear about **The Sisters Of Perpetual Indulgence** who are famous for raising money and consciousness in the fight against AIDS. Perhaps **Jerry Springer's** talk show will keep the faith by featuring cool queens like **The Wonder Twins**. Carlos and Louis are a pair of L.A. club kids who represent the Drag point of view on talks shows. They'll also make a cameo in the Spring '96 release of **'Birdcage'** an American version of **'La Cage Aux Folles'** starring **Robin Williams**. That is unless they get left on the cutting room floor.

In other news, in April of '95, **The First Annual Best Female Impersonator Contest of California** was held. Female impersonators and their admirers gathered at the **Gallery Theater** in historic **Barnsdall Park** in Silverlake. Contestants included: **Gina Ricci**, **Char**, **Bonnie Tayler**, **Monique Scott**, **Renee Deveroux**, **Monique Spice De Chambers**, **Monica Valentine**, **Kyla Richardson**, **Sean Michaels**, **Ted Liso** as **Miss Joan Crawford**, **Stacy Hollywood**, **Celeeya**, **Tina Fernando**, **Miss Tika**, **Alondra**, **Veronica**, **Chanel De Ja Foxx**.

Meldy and **Paloma San Juan**. **Madame Dish**, **Viktoria La Voovah** and **Stephen Sherman** emceed and loosened up the crowd between acts. **Karina**, **Miss Gay California 1995**, made a cameo appearance, and later went on to become **Miss Gay Universe** at the pageant held in July in **San Francisco**, benefiting **Asian AIDS Project** and the **Filipino Task Force on AIDS**. The audience yelled **Fish! Fish!**, but it didn't mean that anyone smelled bad, only that the audience really liked one of the performers who happened to win, namely the gorgeous **Renee Deveroux**.

In May, it was time for the **First Annual Porn Star Softball Game**, and Drag was there. Whirling dervish/Drag performance artist **Renee Sauvage** gave a rousing halftime dance of a thousand, well, ten or twenty veils. A twirl of her skirt exposed nether regions to the delight of the folks in the bleachers. Next, **Karen Dior** stepped up to bat and sang an original tune by **Sharon Kane**. Also in May, **Jackie Beat** co-starred in **'St. Elmo's Phire'**, a play spoofing the screenplay from the early 80's movie of similar moniker. The cross-gendered casting was the real story at **The Globe Playhouse**. The rafters filled as **Jackie Beat** aka **Kent Fuher** played the role of **Mare Winningham** playing the role of **Wendy**! After the play, I dropped in on **Dragstrip 66** for their **'Genital Hospital'** party.

In June, **'Wigstock. The Movie'** blew into town, and many a Queen showed up at the **Directors Guild** on **Sunset Boulevard** for the opening per-

formance which benefited **AIDS Project Los Angeles**. **Wigstock's** originator, **The "Lady" Bunny**, flew in from **New York** with director **Barry Shills** and members of the cast including: Drag pal **Missstress Formika**, **Joni Mitchell** impersonator **John Kelly** and **Billi Holiday** channeler **Joey Arias**. L.A.'s local Drag Queens contributed their special sparkle to the evening too. The crowd also included: **Alexis Arquette**, **Candy Ass**, **Bobby Trendy**, **Gary Rogers** as **Leona Helmsley**, **Real Girl Robin Cameltoe**, **Sean DeLear**, the **Chanell Twins**, **Latoya Latex**, **Empira**, **Christina Dahling**, **Coffee** and **T.V. Epic**. Publisher **Marlena Lacey**, **Jackie Beat** entertained us with a song, and the \$75 entry fees raised more than **\$20,000** for **APLA**.

Another Drag thing to do in June was **Dragstrip 66's Summer School Party**. My pleated plaid mini skirt made its debut, while many at the club sucked on lolly pops, an authentic **Private Girl's School** prop I was told. It was around that time that the **L.A. Times** featured an article about **Cuba's** Drag ballerina **Hugo Hernandez**. **Hugo** had his upper teeth removed to look more like the target of his loving parodies, the wildly popular aging Cuban prima Ballerina, **Alicia Alonzo**. "No sacrifice is too great for my art," he remarked. Quite a sentiment, considering the fact that he's doing Drag inside **Fidel Castro's** repressive regime. **The Purple Circuit Newsletter** arrived in my mailbox, featuring news of Gay and Drag oriented theater around the country. Some tempting listings were: **'Dressing**

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WILD ABOUT MAKEUP

Wild About Makeup is an informative booklet about the art of makeup. It describes how to attain a glamorous look for a night on the town, or create some special effects for stage and screen. It was written by **Tina Hutchence**, professional makeup artist. Tina's inspiration was her beautiful and talented mother, the former **Patricia Kennedy**. Patricia was a Supermodel in the 1950's and the author of **"Makeup is Magic."** Tina remembers the special excitement present in the early days of Super modeling. During Tina's childhood in Australia, Patricia, Tina's mom, was in demand as a model. In print and on the runway, Patricia's chameleon qualities fascinated Tina. It was rare to find makeup artists and hairstylists at a shoot or backstage. The model was on her own then. Often, when they needed a child in a show, Tina would fill in; or if her mother could not find a sitter, Tina would accompany her and just observe all the activity in the dressing room. A professional

model would carry an enormous bag filled with gloves, scarves, shoes, jewelry, hairpieces, and of course makeup. For a runway show, Patricia would carefully lay



out jewelry, shoes, hairpieces and even lipcolors - ahead of time. And, with the help of a dresser, perform the most amazing transformations in lightening speed, only to appear in front of the audience again, and again, poised and ready to sweep down the runway with flashbulbs flashing from every side. With

"Wild About Makeup," Tina follows in her mother's footsteps. Would you like to look like a siren from the 30's, a diva from the 40's or a go-go girl of the 60's? Is there a difference between the makeup for a Geisha girl or a Kabuki actor? Have you ever wanted to copy Supermodel **Varushka** and paint your bald head so that it blended in with some stones from the bottom of a river? From the classic to avant gard, tips, anecdotes, historical facts, trend forecasting, personal remarks and easy to follow drawings and photos, it's all here. **Wild About Makeup** also includes a professional resource listing with addresses and phone numbers for ordering supplies and catalogs. Get **'Wild About Makeup'** for yourself or as a gift for a friend. As a special offer to **Dragazine's** readers, instead of the regular price of over \$40 for your copy of **Wild About Makeup**, send only \$24.95 postage paid (CA residents add 8.25% sales tax for a total of \$27.01) to **TM Products**, P.O. Box 33, 15445 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91403.

VIDEO NOIRE

'Sugar and Spice, An Exploration of the Fascinating World of Transvestites, Drag Queens and Transsexuals,' is a new video of older footage finally released by director **Larry Wessel**. It features the likes of **Sandy Crisp** as **The Goddess Bunny**, **Miss Kelly**,



Karen Dior and her alter ego **Geoff Gann**, **Tyrrell Morris** and **Amy**, **John Epperson** as **Lypsinka**, **Glen Meadmore**, **Las Reinas de Esta Noche**, **Gender**, **The Cosmic Daniel**, **Alexis Miranda**, **Las Reinas de Las Estrellas**, **Sharon Kane** and

Room Divas,' 'Lypsinka,' 'Miss Coco - A Legend In Progress,' 'Prime Time With Joan Jett Black,' 'Whoop De Doo,' 'Victor/Victoria,' 'Kiss of the Spider Woman,' and 'Dishing With Divine.' Get on their mailing list by sending \$20 to **Bill Kaiser** at 2025 Griffith Park Blvd., #4, Los Angeles, CA 90039.

July is not a Drag Queen's favorite month. After all, heat, wigs and makeup do not mix well. Drag performer **Greg Halstead** bucked the weather and invited any Drag Queen who was willing and able to perform at his **Sideshow Lounge** review. I joined in and appeared for a short set at the **Belly Room** of the **Comedy Store** located on **Sunset Boulevard**. **Misty Cologne** (known lovingly as Messy Colonic to her closest friends) and **Pagan Holiday** co-emceed the series of campy Saturday nights. I did a turn one Saturday as my new character **Shebeeba Debwee**, beat poetess. July was also the month of a homestyle Drag performance actually held in someone's house called **The Sugar Shack**. **Sugar Placebo** lent her house in the hills for a semi-regular performance space for homegrown talents. **Pagan Holiday** and **Misty Cologne** also co-hosted this event. There was a lot of lipsynching going on by the core group which included, **Crystal DeCanter**, **Kitten Kaboodle**, **Wanda Lust**, **Amanda Reckonwith**, **Sugar**, **Ida Wanna**, **Lola Palooza** and more.

Thank you to **Charles K.** in **Las Vegas** for sending **Dragazine** a delightful zine from **Sin City** in July called **'The Wig Snatcher.'** It's all the news that's fit to print about the **Glitter Gulch** Drag scene. Artist **Gary Tosti**, aka **Crystal DeCanter**, had his beautiful lifesize paintings of Drag Queens hanging for the month on the walls of the

Cobalt Cantina restaurant in **Silverlake**. The show was called **'Grande Delusion.'** There were a large number of very small and very large oil paintings of local Drag talent, including: **Diamonelle**, **Ida Wanna**, **Fanny Diver**, **Kitten Kaboodle** and **Wanda Lust**. By the middle of the month, **Tommy Tang's** restaurant established a successful string of **Tuesday Night Drag** events which began earlier in the **Spring**. Waiters dressed as waitresses, ala **Lucky Cheng's** in **New York**, and the management encouraged customers to join in on the crossdressing. Host **Patrik Shooting Star** created the weekly events, then added special monthly extravaganzas with entertainment. In **July**, on the occasion of the **'Tiki Lounge'** party, **Barbra** by **Greg Halstead** and **Pagan Holiday** flanked me at my table for some nouvelle Thai delights. Among the entertainers was the incomparable **Holly Woodlawn** who danced a special **Hula** about her ripe papayas. **Holly** has been appearing at **Checca** night club on **Santa Monica Blvd**. Even **Kato Kalin** showed up to soak up the Drag ambience, but decided not to print his picture here. **Kato**, your 15 minutes are up! Across town, **Helen Heels** offered a course in jewelry design for Drag Queens during a series of evening classes held at **Bova Gallery**. The promise of one-of-a-kind stunning accent pieces, shoulder dusting earrings and matching bracelets was an irresistible lure for many a big-boned gal. Thank you **Bruce**, aka **Gwen**, the owner of **Bova**. Call there at 213-653-3424 for future happenings.

In **August**, I attended one of the famous coronations held by the **Imperial Movie Capital** chapter of the Drag/social/charity organization.

The Imperial Court. I wore a gorgeous red stretch lace see-through mock-turtle-neck mid-calf sheath with black underslip I purchased at a friendly lingerie shop on **Wilshire Blvd**. I had to look smashing for my presentation to the Court, and in honor of the personal invitation by hunky **Emperor Jim Mangia**. He seated me at the head table with **Empress CoCo LaChine** from **New York**, living legend **Empress Jose I The Widow Norton** from **San Francisco** who started the whole Court System, **Empress Nicole The Great** from **San Diego**, and **Emperor Jim's** mom!

Next on the calendar, **Chris Doggett** performed his one night sold out show at **Highways** performance space in **Santa Monica** as his Drag Queen Shamaness alter ego, **Eartha Madre**. The event was videotaped for entry into a future **Gay & Lesbian Film & Video Festival**. Read about **Chris** and **Eartha** later in this issue! Next, **Patrik Shooting Star** joined me for an evening of Drag theater at the **St. Genesius Theater** in **West Hollywood**. **Jackie Beat** and **Sherry Vine** were over the top as two competitive roommates in a play **Jackie** wrote especially for the two of them called **'Double Wide Female.'** It was a spoof on **'Single White Female.'** Find out more about these two in their exclusive **Dragazine** interviews! Finally in **July**, **Dragazine** subscriber **Terry** in **New York** continued to mail us more Drag clippings. It was through those that I read about the ecstatic reviews Drag actor/writer **Charles Busch** received for replaced his female lead in his own play, **'Swingtime Canteen.'** Congrats **Charles**!

I actually read a book in **August**! **'If You Ask Me'** is a collection of movie reviews by movie critic **Libby Gelman-Waxner**, who just happens to

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Chi Chi La Rue. It's quite extensive and almost 2 hours long. If anyone hung around the Los Angeles Drag underground scene during the late 80's and early 90's, they might appreciate this video collection of grass-roots Drag performances. The underlying glue that unifies the collection is that Transsexuals, Transvestites, Drag Queens and their admirers sometimes flock to the same night spots, sometimes shop at the same stores, sometimes are fans of the same artists, but most times only have being of the male sex in common. It is obvious that many hours and nights have been spent collecting these segments lovingly. Not every word uttered by those featured is gold, although I think the editor thought so. One can be distracted by these points, or accept the raw footage for the unabashed devotion it implies. One of the most fascinating segments features **Karen Dior** taping his/her penis up between his/her legs. It's all done with a few strips of duct tape. It was nostalgic for me to watch this video. I think

'Sugar and Spice' is a mixed bag, but if you're nostalgic like I am about the early days in L.A., you'll love this. Send \$25 postage paid within the U.S. in check or money order to **Larry Wessel**, P.O. Box 1611, Manhattan Beach, CA 90267-1611.

HARD DAY'S DRAG

Take four "average" gay guys with a zest for life and laughs, throw in a lust for show tunes, stitch it all together with miles of sequins, and you have the **Camp Mary-Makers**,

a Los Angeles-based drag/comedy troupe. Founders **Miss Inlink** and **Clippy**, the only survivors of the original cast, have been dressing up and making crowds laugh at fund raisers, parades and private parties for over eight years. What took an impromptu show at an AIDS benefit to blossom into a toe-tappin' ensemble of guys determined to make the world a funnier place? "We found ourselves at a men's retreat, and there wasn't a friggin' thing to do," says **David**, aka **Clippy**, the **Camp Mary-Maker's** choreographer. "Someone

had the bright idea of staging a Drag show to liven things up." From the first show, the **Camp Mary-Makers** have acknowledged the influence of other drag/comedy groups such as the **Campers**. Following in their footsteps, they lampoon Broadway shows, holiday songs and Christmas Carols, Hollywood film classics and the stars who made them famous. As they honed their talents, their dance routines became more elaborate, as did their props and costumes. Their music library is as important as the costumes and wigs. They have more than 160 tried-and-true numbers from past shows. "We keep it light and fun. There's too much negativity in life already," explains **Bron**, aka **Miss Inlink**. "We're not female impersonators, we're too exaggerated. We camp it up, go for outrageous costumes, mile-high hair, and give our audiences a couple of hours to forget their troubles. Our goal is to make people laugh. It's as simple as that." Armed with fabulous gowns, mile-high hairdos, press kits and audition tapes, they're ready to



Model: Miss Inlink

be 'Jeffrey' author **Paul Rudnick** in reality. **Paul** writes under his **Libby** guise for the **Premier Magazine** movie review column the book is based on. **Libby** fills us in on life as a **Junior's Active Wear Buyer**, life as the mother of her daughter **Jennifer**, life as the daughter of her mother **Sondra Krell-Gelman** and life as the patient of the therapist **Arlene Cole-Natbaum**. **Libby** goes on about her crush over actor **Dennis Quaid** and her marriage to highly successful Jewish dentist **Josh Waxner**. Finally, she does a few movie reviews. It's lite, kvetchy and full of wit!

The arrival of **September** meant that **Halloween** was 60 days away and counting! My new friend **Richard Velasco** (who does Drag under the name **Coffee**), invited a few of us 'girls' to hang out en femme at a large cocktail party he was coordinating called **The Wrapper Party**. The unusual event occurred at the renovated art deco **El Rey Theater** on **Wilshire Blvd**. **Wrapper** is a clothing manufacturer whose owner wanted a party with a twist, and we gave it to him! On stage entertaining were Drag chanteuse **Gender**, **Madonna** lookalike **Viva** and **Brent Allen** who does a great **Bette Midler**. Others performers included **Bradley Picklesheimer**, **Blanca Basura** and **Christina Dahling**. Minglers included: **Dad George**, **John**, **Glen**, **Gizelle**, **Helen Heels**, **Ruby Tuesday**, **Gina Lotriman**, **Sharon Needles**, **Govina** and **Patrik Shooting Star**. **September** was also the month for a fabulous Drag beauty pageant called **The Battle for the Tiara**. Read more about this event elsewhere in **Dragazine**! Drag pal **Momma** met me at the pre-show cocktail party to pick up her ticket, then watched the show with me in the balcony of the famous 1200

seat sold-out **Wilshire Ebell Theater**. Winner **Kitten Kaboodle**, **Miss Nebraska**, brought out a cow and milked it for her talent portion! **Lasagna Buttafucio**, **Miss New Jersey**, vowed to return next year for her rightful crown.

Can there be Drag on radio? Yes, according to ex-Campers performer **Chris Fabbro**. He's been producing his own campy show on college station **KXLU** for over five years now, and invited me to spin some Drag music! **Chris'** show is called **'Camp Stop The World.'** and it's a hoot! My collection of Drag music included cuts by **Dame Edna Everage** as she narrated her audio-taped autobiography, **'My Gorgeous Life.'** **RuPaul's 'Supermodel'**, **John-Fredrick's 'Drag Queen.'** and a few classic **Ray Bourbon** cuts.

DAP publishers sent **Dragazine** a review copy of **'Male to Female: La Cage aux Folles'** in **September**. It's a great collection of photos of Drag Queens and Transsexuals by photographer **Vivienne Maricevic**. **DAP** also published **Nan Goldin's 'The Other Side.'** Congratulations to **Eartha Madre** and the gang of **The Psy-Cabaret** for being one of the **L.A. Weekly's Picks of the Week**. **Psy-Cabaret** was an ensemble performance held at **Glaxa**, the old **Olio** performance space in **Silverlake**. The improvisational troupe included **Eartha Madre**, **Renee Sauvage**, **Ethyl Alcohol**, **Misty Cologne** and **Dead Fresca**. In the middle of the run, **Renee** broke her foot in a sky diving accident (!) while dressed in Drag! She was participating in **YDIVE**, a charity fund raiser for the **Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian Community Services Center**. She has since recuperated.

'To Wong Foo, Thanks For Everything, Julie Newmar,' finally hit the local multiplex in

September. Whatever the critics say, it was a milestone for being a **\$30 million dollar** major studio release featuring Drag. It also provided a reason for **Julie Newmar** to revive her career, if you call judging Drag Queen contests all over town a return.

October (Halloween Month) arrived, and even though I do Drag all year long, it's still special on **October 31st** I celebrated the arrival of the month by watching a live episode of the weekly Drag soap opera **'The Plush Life,'** put on by the folks of **Dragstrip 66**. The next weekend I attended **Dragstrip 66's** Halloween party, entitled **Dungeons and Drag Queens**. Everyone was there including: **Empira**, **Sugar Placebo**, **Crystal DeCanter**, **Pagan Holiday**, **Kitty Leukemia**, **Nick Paul** (who likes to call herself **Summer Storm** now), **Chilli Pot**, **Sharon Needles** and **Candy Ass**.

Next, I helped to add glamour at a **Project Angel Food** party called **Wigfest '95**, held at **Micky's Disco** in **West Hollywood**. The event honored volunteers, and doubled as a seasonal costume contest for the entertainment of the crowd. **Comedian Ant** emceed the motley proceedings with tongue in cheek, and celebrity judges included: **Karen Dior**, **Phyllis Dillis**, **Bradley Picklesheimer**, **Sunflower au-Go Go**, **Misty Cologne**, **Dead Fresca** and **Ethyl Alcohol**. **Miss Beverly Fairfax** won, dressed in a pink ball gown of his/her own creation. **Beverly** is better known as porn star **B.J. Slater**!

Next, **The Red Dress Party** was the right party to be seen at, and I was there! My new Drag buddy **Maxxi Padd** joined me along with our Drag pal **Coffee**. **Coffee** just had to be contrary and called herself **Rhapsody In Blue**. She further

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take the act on the road! Don't miss 'em! Write to 10125 De Soto Ave, # 35, Chatsworth, CA 91311, or call Bron at 818-700-1664. They'll be anxiously chewing on their Lee Press-On ® nails waiting to hear from you.

GREETINGS FROM CANDI KRAMER!

Hello to **Dragazine's** readers! This is **Candi Cramer** from **Baltimore, MD**!! Yes, **Baltimore** has a very strong Drag community! Over the years as my alter ego **Candie**, I have really enjoyed doing Drag in pageants and performed in shows as a female impersonator. When dressed as a boy, I perform live music having attended the **Oberlin Conservatory of Music**. I'm here to tell you how excited I am about my new venture, **'She-Male'**! **'She-Male'** is a song that I wrote and artistically created. It's set to a **'London House Beat,'** and is about five Drag Queens and myself being sought after by men driving by us after we departed a night club. In

addition to my speaking roles and "rap," lead vocals are shared by another one of the "girls" whose name is **Kinera**. I also invited two real females to appear, whose names are **Melanie**, my "little sister," and **Lisa** on background instrumental flute. I have had total control of **'She-Male'** from every aspect. My record is proof that if one stays focused, then they can reach their goals! Currently, **'She-Male'** is only available on cassette tape for \$8, which includes shipping in the U.S. If **Dragazine's** readers would like to hear some hot trax, please send check or money order to **Cramer Productions**, 1710



Park Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21217. To join our Fan Club and get a personally autographed 8X10 color photo of me, **Candy**, plus a cool newsletter, please send \$20 extra. Again, thank you **Dragazine** for your support, and hope to hear from all of those fans of Drag and Drag music real soon!

ANYTHING BUT A DRAG!

Can you imagine sitting at a dinner table across from **Janet Jackson**, **Madonna**, and **Joan Rivers**? I can't either, but the next best thing happened to me on **September 21st, 1995**. Hi, I'm **Shannon Schechter**, and I had the greatest time attending **The Ultimate Female Impersonator Contest**. It was all in honor of the 10th anniversary of **"An Evening at La Cage"** which stars **Frank Marino** at the **Riviera Hotel**. The dinner party I mentioned was on a Sunday night at the close of a thrilling week of competition. The festivities began days earlier. The



first night, I enjoyed an evening at a local night club where hundreds of female impersonators from all over the world strutted their stuff in the preliminaries. Each one was great, but only one would win the contest, not to mention the \$5,000 prize. **Frank Marino**, the star of **La Cage**, welcomed all the contestants and escorted me around the club, introducing me to a few **Chers**, many **Lizas**, and more **Barbras** than I can remember. After a few days of trials, by Wednesday there were only 10 contestants left. Each performer played to a sold-out crowd during the already star-studded revue. **Frank Marino** as **Joan Rivers** hosted the night with style and grace

added insult to injury by wearing a flowing blue ball gown she designed for the occasion. **Maxxi** borrowed a red dress and an **Endora** wig from me for the party. Tongues wagged around the party that the **Drag Queen In The Blue Dress** better not go near the pool area unless she was prepared to get wet!

Halloween fell on a **Tuesday** night this year, and **Maxxi** turned into a great Drag (and otherwise) friend and companion by joining me for the evening. First, we made a pit stop near the **Sunset Strip** at a smart costume party. Next, we hit **Santa Monica Blvd** where a sea of over **70,000** people crowded the wide thoroughfare, according to the **L.A. Times**. **Maxxi** and I forwent high heels and wore construction boots for the long walk from **La Cienega Blvd.** to **Robertson Blvd.**, knowing that we would thank ourselves later. Many a Drag Queen hobbled along in high heels beside us during the night as we winked to each other knowingly. We stopped by **Luna Park** night club to say hi to **Jackie Beat** and **Candy Ass** who were performing there. **Jackie** headlined with her **Kiss** cover band, '**Kiss My Fat Ass**,' and **Candy** sang with her **Elastica** styled group, '**Marble**.' Back on the street, **Maxxi** and I checked out photographer **Jay Fraley's** well-lit space where he had passers-by lined up for photos. He's been setting up each year on the street to snap photos for a book he's doing featuring 10 years of Halloween costumes. It's planned for publication in the year **2,000!** It wouldn't have been **Halloween** without a street performance by **The West Hollywood Cheerleaders**, celebrating their 10-year anniversary next year! The current group includes **Popcorn Lycra**, **A-Net**, **Ineeda Mann**, **Amber**

Snow, **Sueey**, **Tammy Y-Knott**, **Ginger Snap**, **Iona Traylor**, **Ivana Hump**, **Gloria Hole**, **Sh'Cola**, **Niagara** and **Joey**, yet to be named. For auditions, call them at 310-652-5077.

Congratulations to **The High Brow Society** in **San Francisco** for having another triumphant fund raising **Halloween Ball!** Their '**Diva Las Vegas**' party benefited the **AIDS Legal Referral Panel** and the **Eureka Valley Team Program for Gay and Lesbian youth**. It all took place at the fictional '**Tropicastro Casino and Lounge**.' The event raised almost \$14,000! Ah, the power of Drag. Unlike last year's video offer, mentioned in *Dragazine*, 1995's video was only made available to attendees, such as **Ava Iyna** and **Fefe Fofum**. Write to 121 Hancock St., San Francisco, CA 94114 to attend the '96 bash.

PETA, aka **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals**, sent out a news release announcing that Drag **SuperModel RuPaul** would be on the cover of the new **PETA Shopping Guide Booklet**. That's enough of a reason to order one for me! Call 301-770-PETA, and don't be cruel! '**The Rocky Horror Picture Show**' celebrated it's 20th Anniversary in **October!** It's time to do **The Time Warp** again! **Rocky Horror** has become the longest-running film in movie history, grossing more than **\$150 million dollars** to date! Congratulations to Drag sensation **Ruby Tuesday!** She appeared on the Halloween episode of the **ABC** comedy **Grace Under Fire**. **Ruby** played a Drag version of **Brett Butler** who tricks or treats at Grace's house. **Miss Tuesday** is now being represented by **Dragon Talent Agency** these days, darling.

And finally in **October**, the **Best Of L.A. Issue** of

the **L.A. Weekly** picked **Dragazine** as one of the best zines in town!!!

In **November**, **The 9th Annual New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film/Video Festival** sent out invitations, and **Party Talk's Linda Simpson** was there to molest the public with a film overview entitled '**The Drag Explosion**.' The program intermingled samples of mainstream media's coverage of drag and work produced with a 'Gay' sensibility. "Compare and contrast, Miss Thing," said the invitation. **Chi Chi La Rue** had another smashing birthday party, and even **RuPaul** was there! Is **Chi Chi** getting **RuPaul** onto the sets of **Falcon** movies or what? Happy **Bi-day Sheesh!** I attended in hooker Drag (o.k., you can laugh!) with pal **Maxi Pad**. We thought we were going to **Dragstrip's Working Girl Party**, but never made it. **The Chanell Twins** were back again this year with a calendar for 1996. Experience a double dose of daily delight, fashion, fads and fantasy by spending 1996 with those supermodels, **Linda Evangelistick** and **Christy Gurlington!** To order, call 213-654-6580.

1996 looks like another great year ahead for Drag! I'll be going to see **Jim Bailey** perform as **Judy Garland** and **Barbra Streisand** at **Cal State University, Northridge**, in February. Call 818-785-8885 for ticket information. He'll also be in **San Diego** at **San Diego's Symphony Hall** later that month. Call them at 619-699-4205 for further info. For future bookings, call 310-271.1975.

Finally, we didn't get to sell the back cover to **Birdcage** or the **Riviera Hotel** or **Bailey's Irish Cream**, so tell them they missed out!

'Til next time, see you on the Boulevard, Miss Thang!

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to introduce each impersonator. Around midnight, **Marino** received a sealed envelope containing the names of the three finalists. **Darryl** as **Janet Jackson**, **David** as **Reba McEntire** and **Barbra Streisand**, and **Chad** as **Cher** were to compete for the \$5,000 cash prize. Thursday, the **Riviera** laid out the red carpet for the press, executives, and friends for the actual 10 year celebration of **La Cage**. When it came down to it, after days of performing his heart out, **David** as **Reba McEntire** became the **Ultimate Female Impersonator** and was awarded a check for \$5,000. I know I'll never end up at **Spago's** for the **Academy Awards** dinner, but thanks to **Frank Marino** and **La Cage**, I got the next best thing. **Frank** said to say hello and reminded all of *Dragazine's* readers to visit him when they're in town. He also mentioned that if anyone would like a signed program from his **La Cage** show, please send \$8 to the **Frank Marino Fan Club**, 9041 **Sandy Shores Drive**, **Las Vegas**, NV 89117.

THE NAME GAME

So far, we've dug up well over 200 Drag Names in this column since we first published in 1991. Some are sent in by readers, others are handed to us from the Drag muses. We still get fan letters for **Beth Wethlern**, one of our favorites too! In the mean time, here's some old and new terms from the Drag Underground. Take notes, *Girlina!*

Beat Your Face v. - To put makeup on, **Clocked v.** - Like ticketing someone who's speeding. Reading a Drag Queen for being a man in a dress, **Fish n.** - If she's convincing as a woman, call her Fish as a complement!, **Gaff n.** - A g-string that flattens out a revealing bulge in the front of a skirt, **Girlina n.** - term of endearment between two Drag Queens, **Heterovestite n.** - combination of the words **Heterosexual** and **Transvestite**. Yes, straight men do crossdress! **Mangina n.** - A Drag Queen's coochie, **Tucked v.** - taping a penis up between the legs to eliminate the telltale bulge in a skirt, **Skirtsnake n.** - Same as a **Trouser Trout** only in a skirt - a Drag Queen's hardon, **T1 and T2 n.** - Pre-op and post-op transsexuals T1's have had breast implants but still retains her penis. **Twenty Four Seven n.** - Living as a woman 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Now, some Name Game names for every homo sapiens out there!



THE DRAG QUEENS IN THE BAND: A gratuitous photo of **Dragon Talent Agency's** Drag Queen models & their fearless leader, **Real Girl Robin Cameltoe** (center).

Agnes of Gosh
Bea Reasonable
Bessie Mae Mucho
Candy Wrapper
Catherine The Above Average
Dee Playtable
Kim Ono
Clare Boothe Luce Change
Rhea Listik
Rosie Cheeks
Semi Sweet Charity
Snow White Trash
Vedie Gourmet
Venus de Mile-High Lo

THE SEVENTH ANNUAL

Battle For the Tiara

Photography by
John Paschal

BEAUTY CONTEST

Who would win
and lose, and who
would let Lasagna
Buttafucio,
Miss New
Jersey, down
easy..., again?

with Lois Commondenominator

It was the day after the televised Miss America Pageant from Atlantic City, but the date of the real main event, The Battle For The Tiara '96. Loyal fans of beauty pageants of any kind, and we mean *any* kind, were there for 1995's bloodbath in heels.

The prestigious title of Miss Tiara was up for grabs, again. Eight contestants had been chomping on their fake nails all year to showcase their "beauty" and "talents." Tess Tosterone, Miss New York and 1995's winner, knew the day would come when she'd take that final farewell walk, fork over the crown to whomever the panel of celebrity judges forced her to, and..., well, have an alley named after her.

This year's panel of judges was a hearty lot. They had to be! For one thing, it was painfully obvious from the start that this was not a beauty pageant. Then there were those persistent rumors of judge-stalking by a certain two-time runner-up (whose name will be withheld for security reasons, and she knows who she is, Lasagna.) The panel included actress Julie Newmar, designers Bob Mackie and Ray Agnayan, actor Im J. Bullock, former Miss South Carolina and Miss USA, Lu Parker, Miss



Lasagna Buttafucio:
When am I gonna win
this goddamn thing?

Tiara 1994 Bea Anne Bellington, Master of Ceremonies Patrick Rush's married and pregnant (in that order) sister Megan Rush Mayer, Patrick's boss, Casting Director Meg Liberman, the Kids in the Hall's Scott Thompson, actresses Nell Carter and Kathy Najimy.

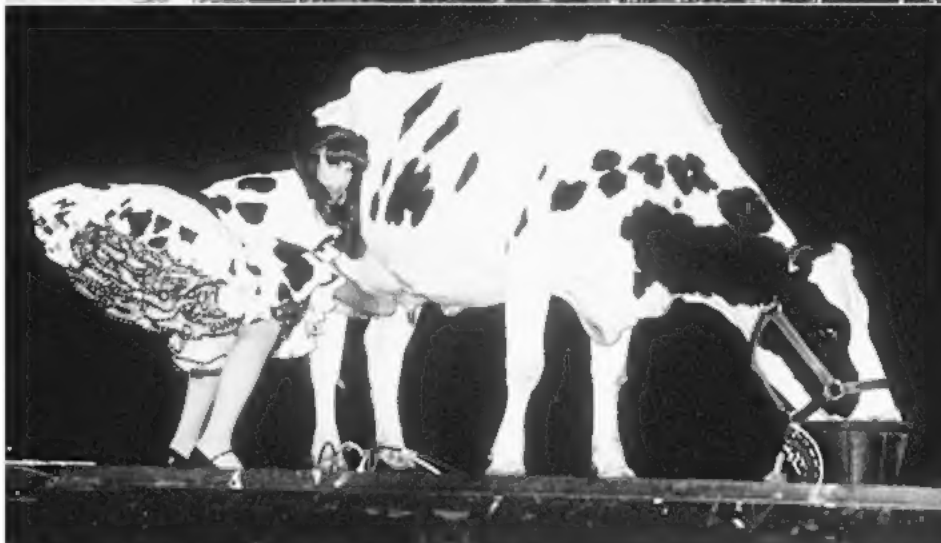
The burning issue on everyone's mind besides who was going to win was, Would they keep the swimsuit portion in the show? Other controversies swirled around the cocktail reception that took place earlier in the evening: Will they ever come up with any actual duties for Miss Tiara to perform during her reign? Should Olympia Onassis, Miss Florida, wear anything under her see-through evening gown? Was the rumor true that Kitten Kaboodle, Miss Nebraska, had a cow backstage to be brought out and milked for her talent portion? Would past runner-up Lasagna Buttafucio, Miss New Jersey, win the Susan Lucci award again? No, No, Yes, Yes, were the answers, but this wagging tongue wanted to know more. What was the history of this event, or less politely put, who was responsible (irresponsible?) for it? A quick referral to my complementary program was in order.

It was all in keeping with a proud tradition that began six years ago, when Channel Liberel, Miss District of Columbia, won the first Miss Tiara title for 1990. Next out of the shoot came 1991's Kallie Lynn Johnson, Miss Tennessee, then 1992's Lilly White, Miss Mississippi, 1993's Dee Dee De More, Miss Texas, and 1994's Bea Ann Bellington, Miss Oklahoma. And then of course, Tess Tosterone, Miss New York and 1995's winner.

At first, it was just a group of "girls" frolicking in a sleazy, rent-controlled apartment in West Hollywood in 1989. Christmas tree lights lined the make-shift runway and a bed sheet doubled as a curtain at the First and Second "Battle."

Year three marked the official start of the show as a fundraiser. Forty people with nothing better to do, piled into a bigger apartment and raised over \$400! In year four, the pageant moved to a house in the hills, where they crammed over 100 screaming fans into a lovely rumpus room. To everyone's surprise, they raised over \$1,500!

Year five was the year when things really got out of hand. The show went on the road and organizers rented out the first "official" theater that seated 220. They sold out every seat and raised over \$5,000. In 1994, the sixth year, they



Top left: Miss Nevada Lotta Slots: butt of course! top right: Tess Tosterone (center) with her back up girls Poolay La Mer and Holly Mackerel singing Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy. above: Miss Nebraska Kitten Kaboodle milking cow.



Above left: Della Mae DeVille, Color Commentator and Ambassador of Good Will. Above right: Kitten Kaboodle in her swimsuit. Below right: Olympia Onassis in her Lady of the Evening Gown.



AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: top: Judy and Carol (Lesbian Lovers); center and bottom: visiting luminaries stealin' a little thunder from the contestants, Empira and Momma, Miss Temple 1996.

PHOTO: DINA/NE

PHOTO: DINA/NE

took a leap of faith and rented the El Rey Theater that held 450. Five hundred people showed up and helped bring the house down by raising over \$16,000 for charity!

This year's lucky seventh competition exceeded all fund raising expectations! Held on September 17th, 1995, at the glamorous 1,200 seat Wilshire Ebell theater in Los Angeles, the sold-out event raised well over \$40,000! 100% of every dollar went directly to AID for AIDS, providing direct financial assistance in the areas of housing, utilities and health insurance to persons with HIV/AIDS, who are disabled and under sever financial hardship. For more information, please write to: AID for AIDS, 8235 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90046, or call 213-656-6085.

The list of volunteers has grown from year to year echoing the success of the event, and the current list is no exception. Special thanks go to: Southern California Center for Immune Suppression at Midway Hospital, Motivational Media, the Pinkies, the Dressers, Costume Designers, Hair and Makeup people, Video by Nicholas Caprio, Sound by David Ferguson, Stage Managed by Bill Coffey, Production Designed by Robert Smith, Art Direction by Rob Allen, Stage Direction by John Frey, Program designed by Tom Welsh, and the Battle for the Tiara Planning Committee; Photographer John Paschal, Alexis Pittman aka Lily White, Dalton Robertson aka DellaMae DeVille, Color Commentator and Good Will Ambassador, Patrick Rush, Tim Sullivan, Brett Juris, Ed Wassall, ticketing by Tim Aitkens, Tom O'Gara, Dave Hamilton, Tim Robinson and Jay Castellano, the reigning Miss Tiara, Steven Smith as Tess Tosterone, Tess's Backup Girls: Poolay La Mer and Holly Mackerel, and finally the contestants; Matt Durkan as Karen Carpenteria, Miss California, Louis Mandrapillas as Olympia Onassis, Miss Florida, Greg Gill as GiGi Du Monde, Miss Louisiana, James Gray as Lei Loni Honorback, Miss Hawaii, Jeffrey Drew as Lotta Slots, Miss Nevada, Griffin Meyer as Kitten Kaboodle, Miss Nebraska, John Christiano as Lasagna Buttafucco, Miss New Jersey, and Jody Pennock as Ruby Tuesday, Miss Vermont.

Congratulations go to Kitten (the cow milker) Kaboodle, Miss Nebraska, winner of the title of Miss Tiara for 1996!

See you next year, Lasagna!

The Contestants



The Final Questions



Master of Ceremonies Patrick Rush, impersonating "a deer caught in the headlights," tallies forth to ask the finalists the most important questions of their competitive lives:



Miss California, Karen Carpenteria

Q) What advice would you give to the President of the United States to bring about World Peace?

A) Sing. Sing a Song. Make it simple to last your whole life long. Don't worry that it's not good enough for anyone else to hear. Just sing. Sing a Song.



Miss Florida, Olympia Onasis

Q) What are your future plans?

A) I have all my life to live. I have all my love to give. I will survive! I will survive!



Miss Hawaii, Lai Lani Honorback

Q) To what do you attribute your fashion sense?

A) Pick it fresh and pick it fast before it spoils. The most important thing is, to find someone else to pay for it!



Miss Louisiana, GiGi DeMonda

Q) What is the most important accessory any outfit needs?

A) Diamonds set in platinum.

Miss Nebraska, Kitton Kaboodle

Q) Why do you think you should win tonight?

A) Because Halloween is only a month away and I need that Tiara!



Miss Nevada, Lottie Stots

Q) What has been your lifelong aspiration?

A) I'd like to get Siegfried and Roy out of the Mirage and put a real show girl where she ought to be.



Miss Vermont, Ruby Tuesday

Q) Why should you win the title of Miss Tiara?

A) By winning this crown, I could help the world to get a better focus on loving their insides, not their outsides and turning their upsides inside out.



Miss New Jersey, Lasagna Buttafucio

Q) If you were a fish, what kind of fish would you be?

A) A what? What kind of a question is that? Is this some kind of conspiracy against me? I've got a question for you! When am I gonna win this goddamn thing!?



7th place: Miss Louisiana; 6th place: Miss Florida; 5th place: Miss Vermont; 4th place: Miss New Jersey; 3rd place: Miss Nevada; 2nd place: Miss Hawaii; 1st runner up (to step in if the winner cannot fulfill her duties, or if any nude photos are found): Miss California; Winner: Miss Nebraska

Jackie Beat is the flamboyant Drag personality of performance artist Kent Fuher. Kent is a wildly creative Los Angeles based renaissance man who is almost unknown by the public without his makeup but wildly adored as his alter ego, Jackie. As the larger-than-life Jackie, Kent has written himself the role of a non-conformist tantrum-throwing superstar whose excesses are accepted as badges of honor earned by being the world weary troubled teen that she is. As his male self however, Kent readily admits that he's ignored or just plain discriminated against for being rotund in this body-conscious society. Both he and Jackie have one message in common, and that is that in real life, one size does not fit all.

JACKIE BEAT

Tour de Fierce

Playwrite, Actor, Comedian, Singer, Jackie Beat Says Cheese
For A Close-Up About His Life & Passions

INTERVIEW BY LOIS COMMONDENOMINATOR • PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREG GORMAN

Good afternoon! It's a hot day in L.A. and we're at the Bourgeois Pig, a little coffee house in Hollywood, talking with the fabulous Jackie Beat! Please say hello to your reading public!

Hi! I decided to do the interview here at Bourgeois Pig because it's about a hundred and ten degrees outside and I thought a place that's painted all black with no air conditioning that serves hot coffee would be very pleasant!

Jackie, I first saw you on cable television when you sang some funny original songs and parodies. Is that where most people in the local Southern California area would have first found you?

No. When I moved out here, I worked for a Studio and it's really easy to kid yourself into thinking that you are doing something creative in Hollywood when you work for a Studio. But I mean, I was a glorified secretary. So I quit my job and got a crappy day job, and then I *needed* to do something creative cause I couldn't kid myself anymore. And that's when I really started doing stuff. I wrote a one-man show with like seven or eight different characters, all female of course and with Jackie Beat in between each character. And then I just rented a theater and produced the show and did it. It's funny when you don't know what you're doing, you know, you just barge right in and do it. I did a few of those characters on tape and they played them on cable. Cable's a nightmare! Public Access is a frigging nightmare.

You have 35 minutes to do a 30 minute show. You make a mistake, sorry honey, it's live. And when I was doing this, it wasn't any ground breaking thing, but it was a little different like five or six years ago. I walked into the cable place in drag and they give you attitude. But I just forged ahead.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Did you come to Hollywood because you felt that show business was in your blood?

Well, yeah. I don't think that you can escape your destiny. You may try. Ugh! I was a wreck, right before I moved here. I was living in Arizona, I had two jobs, working the graveyard shift at a hotel doing speed. In Arizona, it's 120 degrees, and I would wear a big black overcoat and a vintage suit. I had a scooter - I was a Mod. Then one day somebody said, 'you should move to L.A.' and within a week I'd sold everything and moved here.

I've been to Scottsdale. It's a very quiet little town.

Were you a theater major in school?

Well, I always was in Drama.

I recently saw you in 'The Bad Weed '73.' Tell us about the character you portrayed.

I played Monica Breedlove, the kookie lesbian neighbor.

She had a great accent! Where was that accent from? It sounded like New England.

I have no idea. You know, not to be mystical about it, but I swear sometimes I have no idea where these things come from. It just came and every once in a while on stage I would feel myself totally losing the accent, or it would turn into something else. It was a weird mix. It was New England but it also had this weird, manic Southern strangeness. That's what everyone talks about. It says a lot for my performance. All they can talk about is my accent.

It's another dimension that you bring to the stage. You have nuance. I think you have a very good ear.

I do. I must admit, I mean I don't toot my own horn very much, (chuckle), I have a great ear. It's so weird. First of all, I memorize everything even if I only see something once. My friends go crazy when we're watching TV, 'cause a commercial will come on and I mean the most obscure weird, oh, what's the word, innocuous commercial and I know every line and every inflection. Kind of touching on what you were talking about before with training, I almost feel like if you want to be a writer, you know, you take all the classes and whatever. But there's no better training than reading constantly if you want to be a great writer. It's almost as if in acting or performing there's no better thing than you could do than just suck up.



everything that you see, and it's everywhere, commercials, advertising, music. Everything penetrates me quite well.

But you're not a couch potato. You get out and live life.

Am I painting this picture that I sit and watch TV all day? When I don't have anything to do, that's my idea of a good time. Sitting at home watching TV.

What's your favorite program?

I like news magazine shows, I hate to admit it. Day One, Prime Time Live, 20/20, 60 Minutes. I'd say Eye To Eye, but I don't think it's on anymore.

What is there in your characters that we don't see in other performers' characters?

It depends on who you're talking about. Jackie Beat or one of the others. It's really funny how you can feel uncomfortable, like if your character Lois Commendominator put on some of the outfits that other people wear, she would feel uncomfortable. You have to be yourself. I don't like anything that's too costume-y. That doesn't mean that I don't like wild outfits or anything, but Jackie doesn't wear sequins, but she does wear boots. I just picture Jackie as this real person, and this real girl her age with her attitude wouldn't wear certain things. Jackie, I always say, is 26. But she can be younger than that. In some of the things I write, Jackie is 15. She's like a troubled teen.

Does she have answers for other troubled teens?

Oh no. The answer is, embrace your troubles. She doesn't hang around with teenagers, so she doesn't have answers for other teens.

What about tips from Kent?

Sure. Kent has some advice. I guess just that everybody's good at something, hopefully, and don't pursue something that you're not good at.

Do you feel that you're working every time you're out in public?

Yeah. Well, it's like anything. I mean, when you start out, you'll do anything. You'll do any club for any price, any benefit, you know, just anything because it's fun and you want to do it. But then there comes a point where you've got to limit yourself. Now when I perform, I show up, I do it, I get the money, and I leave, 'cause it's my job.

When you get in Drag, and I know you have fans, but do you have groupies?

Yes. I'm always shocked that a lot of them are women. First of all, I've had a lot of different fans that go to all of my shows, like cute little boys and people who want to meet me, but recently I was really shocked that there was this girl and guy, who they later told me one's a lesbian and the other's a fag, you figure out which is which. They were going to every show, and every show they would stick around afterwards and give me presents and cards. If somebody gives you a card that says that you make life worth living, you know what I mean, it's amazing! It really is, as corny as it sounds. And then the girl did a little portrait of me, and stuff like that. They came to see *Bad Weed* and were hanging around afterwards, and usually I go outside and

say hi or whatever, but that night I was taking everything off. I was taking off my makeup over this grungy gross sink. The St. Genesius Theater is known for its luxurious dressing rooms. I kind of looked over my shoulder, and the two of them were standing there watching me, and the girl was like, practically in tears. She couldn't believe that she was seeing the real Kent Fuher. It was so cute. It was so unbelievable and very nice. You can't curl up with a greeting card at night, but it's nice.

Tell us about your work as the publisher of your own underground zines, like *Carrie*, *The Magazine That Can Move Things*.

Yes, there was *Carrie*, but there was also *Sexy* which I did with Jeffrey Hilbert, who did *Sin Bros*. *Sin Bros* started out as a small giveaway in coffee houses. I remember going somewhere called "something Lizard" or "Lizard Lounge" or something, and it was a little giveaway thing, and I thought it was so funny. I mean, to pick something up and think these people literally think exactly the way I do! That's why people are fans. I picked it up when it was just a giveaway and it was hysterical, and that's when I started doing my show, and I called them. I think they had just done their first big issue that they were selling, and I called Jeffrey and invited him to the show.

'First and foremost, I want to be funny... I cannot handle a gay commedian who's gay first and funny second.'

and he came and he liked it. Then he asked me to perform at Trade, and then I wrote something for the next issue. I was in this thing called "Dream Date With Carrie Wilson," which was like a Tiger Beat article. Some guy won a date with Carrie Wilson and we did a photo shoot.

Are you getting any big money interest?

This city is full of people who are afraid to take a risk. I mean, there's so much money involved, that I can sort of understand. But then the people that do take the risk, like Roseanne, and have a huge success with it, or like AbFab, you know, something that's just really out there, then everybody copies them. I was just talking to Ann Magnuson. She has a new album coming out called *The Luv Show*. She was saying that everybody makes you think that this is the city where everybody's marching to a beat of a different drummer, but it's the biggest lie in the universe. I just hate to see what's happened to entertainment and the media. I'm all for sound bites and quick MTV things and pop imagery, but I mean, whatever happened to thinking? Like going and staring at a painting and letting it wash over you and being an integral part of the process as opposed to having everything explained to you ala Spielberg.

It's the blanding of culture.

And I think a lot of what I do is a statement on that.

Would you say that you're political?

Well, first and foremost, I want to be funny. I've said this a million times - I cannot handle a gay comedian who's gay first and funny second. Who gives a shit if you're gay? I mean, be funny, and then throw your little gay stuff in there or whatever. I think most of my material would work if I was out of Drag. I mean, I write different articles and columns and the people reading them can't see me.

What kind of a show can they expect when people come to see you?

Well, don't expect anything. So much of expectation, you know, is like expecting too much of the wrong thing. You know what? Prepare to laugh.

Have you had plays produced?

I've done a lot more variety cabaret stuff. Sherry Vine and I did a show called *Rocker Chick*, which had a little story line. Mostly it was singing, and you know there's a little plot, but it's just to move the variety along. Then *Media Whore* was very similar to that, although we did it in a theater. It was like my life story from rags to riches. At the very end, I get shot by a best friend who I always said would be with me, but I dump her when I start to make it. At the end, she shoots me. That had a lot of variety in it also, because it had great people in it like Molly Shannon and Melanie Hutsell from *Saturday Night Live* and Benjamin Zook, and just these amazing people who do impersonations. I wrote most of it, but they did their bits. The first play that I wrote and produced out here other than the one-man show that I did was *Scream Teen Scream*. It was two Halloweens ago, and then we did it again in a theater, because you know, I sell it short. I write this whole thing, I get all these people to be in it, and then we do it one night for a Halloween thing at Luna Park Theater. A Go Go had their Festival A Go Go, and that was my festival. It should have been called Jackie A Go Go. I did *Media Whore*, *Scream Teen Scream*. I was also in *Valley of the Dolls* and *Bad Weed*. 73.

And you were also just recently in 'St. Elmo's Phire.' There's a very funny line you say in that. How did that come about?

Yep, I played the role of Mare Winningham. I put the ham in Mare Winningham. You know, with *Valley of the Dolls*, people know the movie so well and it's so campy and over the top, that you do the lines verbatim, and it works. This, we really had to struggle to find the humor, because this is the most humorless, overwrought, stupid movie ever made. It was a struggle to find the humor, and it finally got to the point where I took it upon myself to change a line. I thought here I am, I'm much bigger than Mare Winningham ever was, so when she's talking about her new apartment and how she woke up and made a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and it was the best one she ever had because it was hers, I changed it to read that it was the best five peanut butter and jelly sandwiches I've ever had. Benjamin Zook [the director] realized that it worked, cause it was the biggest laugh in the show, so he told everybody to twist their lines a little, not too much, just once or twice during the whole

show Those were the some of the biggest laughs

It was inspired! I thought it was a good example of improv.

Well, that was a pretty cheap shot. I'd hate to use it as an example of good improv

You were making fun of yourself before anyone else could. It was a joke about being a big girl. Do a lot of your shows include those types of jokes?

There were a lot of those in that show. I've done shows called *Jackie Beat Is Bigger Than Both Of Us*, *Larger Than Life*, *Body Doubled* and *Kiss My Fat Ass*. Sherry Vine and I worked on something together called *Double Wide Female*. I live in a double-wide trailer and advertise for a roommate. It's a spoof based on the movie *Single White Female*. Anyway we move in together and the next thing I know she goes from being a vegetarian to eating buckets of fried chicken, then dying and cutting her hair and finally doing my Jackie Beat lips.

Those lips! I've seen exaggerations before, but I think you're actually communicating something with these expressions you paint on. Do you think it affects the way people respond to you?

Totally. First of all, do you know how I got those lips? By kissing the devil! But the truth of it is, I never really thought about it. I really came up with the lips because I have a fat face, and I don't have much lips, and when I just paint my normal lips they look skinny and I want everything larger than life. I want them to be almost like they are hanging there. They should be ready to burst - very sensuous. Ultimately what has turned out is that when you're standing there, and you don't have an expression on your face, I do, 'cause I have a perma-sneer. It really looks like I am sneering 24 hours a day. When I smile, it takes away from that because all of a sudden that shape is gone. It's a big, gorgeous smile, but when I'm not smiling, it just reeks of attitude, and the correct one. I might add - exactly how I'm feeling, cunt.

There's a lot that goes into your costumes, and I think you get a lot of support from some very talented people who help you put these looks together.

Well, I have to be honest now, having just come from New York, I mean, they really need to work it. They need a new costume for every night. Sal Perez is my big-time Hollywood costume designer. He's great! I've gotten some of my wigs at Outfitters in Hollywood, and I pay big bucks for those. I had a purple one created for that Wigstock premier party, 'cause I knew I would have to fight for a little attention. It was very Jackie Beat. Can I just tell you, I was floored by the wig that Alexis Arquette made for me. In five minutes for my role in *The Bad Weed*. It was very soft-serve ice cream and technicolor in orange and rusts. If the look isn't right, then you don't feel right. I mean, you know, especially like if you're doing a specific character like when I did *Scream Teen*. *Scream*. My character was 15 years old, and it's a summer party, so I wore a Jackie Beat wig, but I ended up putting it in pigtails. If it's not the right thing, it throws everything off.

One of the things that you do to achieve a look is

that you shave your eyebrows. Was that a hard decision to make to shave them? It's pretty radical.

Well, unless you're a male model, why can't you shave your eyebrows? I understand what you're saying, but I mean if you show up for work without eyebrows, I think most people would think it was a medical problem, and they probably wouldn't mention it. Not having eyebrows is a lot different than you know, having wild colored hair. Not having eyebrows is not that wild.

It's brave to me.

I'm just saying that if I worked at a conservative job, and I shaved my eyebrows, and I heard about it, I'd go through the roof! I mean *they're my eyebrows*. It would be one thing if I wore makeup or did anything strange at work.

You didn't think twice about it?

No. You know why? 'Cause I don't care how I look as a guy. Miss Sherry Vine would not shave hers, she wouldn't even trim them, and I finally said, honey, you're lookin' skaggy in Drag. Sherry is the most amazing performer I have ever met, and I've met a lot, but I mean as far as Drag Queens go, he is a trained actor. He is literally my soul mate. When we were just doing a cold reading of my play *McBeth*, he just rattled it off like he knew it by heart. It was so perfect. We think alike. We worked at a club called "Trade" together and didn't even know each other. Then we ended up going to Six Gallery cafe in West Hollywood for coffee, and one of us threw out some line from *Carrie*, and then we spent the next hour doing the whole movie. I'd never met anybody who was so bonkers over the movie *Carrie*. And then we ended up doing *Carrie* with sock puppets, which was one of the most infamous things we've ever done, 'cause we did the whole movie and took it dead serious.

That sounds wild! Not to change the subject, but I want to know about your role in the Wigstock film. Was this is your big break?

Let me tell you why *The Wigstock* movie was not a big break. It was a great experience and I loved it. Not to be negative, but the reality of it is that it's a documentary. I'm playing myself. There's a bunch of other people in it. The song that I did was dubbed twice. It's not the song that I originally did. I loved being in the movie, I appreciate the fact that they made it work. A lot of people got cut out. It was two years of an 8 hour festival each year, and then all these interviews and backstage stuff, so I'm grateful for the fact that I'm in it, and my number's in it, but it's not the number that I did. As a performer and a writer, I don't want to sing just any old song to be in a movie. That's not important to me. I want people to see what I'm about and what I do.

You were also in a movie called *Grief* where you played the role of a woman. That's different from playing a Drag Queen, and you were very convincing. I might add. I thought it was a funny role. Did you get any notice out of that?

Yeah, I did, but touching on what we just said before, it's like, people would say they thought it was amazing and all these people thought I was really a woman, and it was the funniest part of the



movie, and yet it wasn't so funny that it was ridiculous. I knew I was at times the comic relief but I also knew that this had to be a real person.

Do you have anything on the horizon that we can look forward to?

Despite my amazing performance in *Grief* you know and people saying I was good, and going on and on do I get scripts? I get lousy scripts every once in a while. I'm doing my play *McBeth* but I don't know when. I will have just done Comedy Central's *Out There in Hollywood* special to be taped on October 11th 1995. I just taped it, and then they don't show it until National Coming Out Day. It's the thing that I'm most proud of, because I was terrified. It was all these hardcore traditional stand-up comedians with gay themes. Stand-up is a pretty specific art form and I'd never done it. I've stood on stage and been funny but, once you call it something, that's when you set yourself up for failure. Do you know what I'm saying? It's like if you just sing in the shower, that's one thing, but then you get up at the Metropolitan. Anyway, it was at the Laugh Factory two shows packed house, I've never done stand-up, I'm nervous as shit, half the comics are giving me attitude because I'm in Drag and I was sick with the flu. There was a moment when you stop and think, I'm going to blow it, and then it changes to I could blow it. I went out there, and I just kicked ass. It was wonderful! So I have a feeling when that airs maybe I'll get offers to do stand-up or tour, or open for people, or whatever but I don't know if that's what I want to do. I don't like traveling. I mean, I'll travel if there's a great part. You know what? If I could make a living being in small independent films, a play now and then, I would be very happy. I don't need to be Madonna. Richard Glatzer, when he wrote *Grief* said he wrote that part with me in mind, which is great, and he knew what I was capable of, and he said he couldn't imagine anybody else playing the part. But I see these people making independent gay films, and they're hiring all their friends. With an independent film where you don't have a whole lot of money in it the one part you don't want to make compromises with is the acting. And I don't want to name any names, but I see some films and just don't understand how some of these independent filmmakers have careers.

Have you been thinking of going to the Lesbian and Gay Film Festival that's currently in town?

Well I have a program in the Festival called "Underexposed With Jackie Beat." One of the shorts is called *Two Days At A Time*, which is the pilot episode of *One Day At A Time*, that Katherine Connella and I redubbed. It's ridiculous! It's the most foul-mouthed, disgusting thing! The girls are hookers - it's just disgusting. And then all of a sudden, they break character, and they're talking about Mackenzie doing coke on the set, and then it builds momentum until it just goes crazy and Mackenzie Phillips is talking to Sharon Tate out of *Valley Of The Dolls* on the phone, and then she calls Piper Laurie in *Carrie*. It's really very good. We're going to show it and run, because I think we'll hear about it from their lawyers. And then *Mi Pollo Loco* which is a parody of *Mi Vida Loca*,

about *chola* gang girls, and then two films which I'm not in but Todd Hughes' *Ding Dong* about homicidal Avon ladies, or something like that. I haven't seen it yet, and Jeffrey Hilbert's *Large Diet Cock*. It's sort of the Festival's idea of underground video.

I'm glad you mentioned Jeffrey Hilbert again, because, getting back to him, I haven't seen him around town or heard from him. What's he been up to?

He's doing a new club called "Hai Karate." God only knows if it's going to still be happening when this interview comes out because you just never know Jeffrey's much more than a club promoter. Unless you do The White Party, you don't make a lot of money. It's like pulling teeth to get people to go to these clubs and there aren't tons of performers out here that you can get every week, so I really give him a lot of credit. He's a very talented person. It's so funny I know so many talented people, and one of the great lessons to learn is whether you're going to survive or not, because there's this fine line between doing what you want to do and letting your audience find you and cutting off your nose to spite your face. It's really difficult to figure out.

"I would say Jackie Beat is the ultimate grey area. The moment people figure her out, I'm fucked!"

I wanted you to mention the talent in Southern California that's undervalued. On the other hand, is there enough talent to do a Wigstock West, or is that a New York phenomenon?

It is a New York phenomenon. Drag Queens make a living out there. They can work three or four nights a week and they get paid just to be at clubs and hostess or walk around and talk to people. And they get paid more to do that than most people get to perform out here. There's something happening every night of the week, it's always packed and there's five different things every night. I just don't see what the point would be because, again it would be rehash. We did something called "Liza Palooza" on a much smaller scale at Luna Park. I think Drag for Drag sake is just tired.

I think everyone should express themselves and have fun.

The point of doing something where the gimmick or the main focus is Drag doesn't work for me anymore. There's already been all these plays all over town where the women are playing men and the men are playing women, and you just need to move on. L.A. really needs to move on from doing screen to stage adaptations. It's lazy, and I predict a major backlash against that. A couple of years ago it was brilliant. Sick and Twisted Players in San Francisco did *Carrie*, and they might have done *Poseidon Adventure*, which pisses me off

because these are my two films and doing an all-*Drag* cast. That's why I'm proud of the fact that years ago, Sherry Vine and I could have done *Carrie* but instead we did it with sock puppets, and it's still one of the things that stands out in my mind as something that I'm very proud of.

Switching gears again, I want to go back on a subject. You said that you buy off the rack. You're kind of a large girl now. Where do you go shopping? Lane Bryant?

Yeah believe it or not, Lane Bryant, Sizes Unlimited places like that. I buy the plainest things because Jackie wears a lot of black and it's all in the accessories and personalizing things.

But you've also had some wild accessories, and I'm thinking of that collar with the spikes. Where did you get that thing from?

It was originally a rubber Statue of Liberty head-dress from a costume that Alexis Arquette loaned to me. He'll never see it again which is so true of just about anything anyone lends me.

But you also tread on bad taste. What do you feel about bad taste?

It can be very appealing and it can be very aesthetic.

The reason I mention that is because you gave yourself a black eye one night with makeup effects. You looked like you were a victim of domestic violence. It's not a happy clown face that most Drag Queens are known for.

Yeah I've gotten to the point, and maybe this is the wrong place to say this, in a magazine called "Dragazine," but I'm getting bored with Drag. There's times where you take a break and you need to do it then you're really into it, whatever. But, there's times where I'm going to do a club or I'm going to perform somewhere, or I've got to go somewhere and I'm getting ready. I look in the mirror and I know that I'm not going to give them what they're expecting. It's that simple. And then that one night when I did that big black eye, and I've done it before, I just wanted it to be as brutal as possible. The one eye was completely made up and gorgeous and the other one was black and blue and red, and it was shiny and awful. I just liked the idea that one was gorgeous and the other was hideous.

Do you expect a particular reaction or is it just pleasing yourself?

I have to be honest also, another part of that evening was I was feeling really lazy. I would hate to think that this was all thought out. Well, I wasn't doing it to be serious because I wore sunglasses that night and every once in a while I pulled them off. It sounds funny, but again it's like I always think, what would I get a kick out of? If I saw somebody do something, what would I want to see? That's how it comes out. It's an art form for me - make up and the whole Drag thing. It's like I'm a walking art exhibit. Why do it if you're not going to do something different or have fun with it? Sometimes I wish I was thin cause obviously I'd have a lot more to choose from and I could do a lot more. That's just the bottom line. But I just feel I'm a walking art installation. That's why I got into Drag.

You see these people and the amazing effects they come up with. I went out one night with Candy Ass where we went and bought fake moustaches and I had a fake little choche and mirrored sunglasses and we were in leather from head to toe. I am a big guy and when I go out I am ignored or ridiculed. I am being completely honest. We went out and people did not know it was me. I didn't tell anybody but my name that night was *Jackie Beat*. We wore leather chaps and people did not recognize me. They kind of recognized Candy after a while and then they figured out it was me. But, people were like flirting with me. That's why I do *Jackie Beat* because if I adorn myself people adore me.

Do you think we do Drag not only because we want attention, but attention from prospective suitors?

Yes, and that's the catch. You spend two hours getting ready and then you go out and I'm talking about me. I work hard and spend time getting ready and I work on performances and try to build this alter ego, and then I go out and people bug the shit out of me. *Yeah, bug the shit out of me.* We're in a bar, the music is blaring and they want to have a fuckin' half hour conversation, and I know that people think I'm a total bitch. They just come up and start yakking. It's like I'm there to work the room and mingle and say hi and be seen and that's it. And besides, you can't really hear what anybody's saying, and they're screaming in your ear. And then people come up and say they love you, and you're like, oh, thank you, and then say oh no you don't understand. I mean I really love you and then you say, well you should. There's no right answer. They just stand there until you want to slug them. I don't get it. I have to be honest - I'm always amazed at the fervor with which people pursue me, and I think half of it is playing hard to get or not being accessible. It's a fine line, 'cause I feel like I'm accessible. Do you know what I mean? But, then again ultimately I'm not.

Is Kent Jackie?

In ways I am completely Jackie and in other ways, I'm not like her at all. It gets to the point where even though you don't have the makeup on you're still seeing through her eyes, using her mannerisms and talking like her. I do it all the time. And then there's times when I'm in Drag, and people who really know me say oh God, when you said that it was so Kent. It's all a grey area. If I could sum it up in any way, I would say Jackie Beat is the ultimate grey area. The moment people figure her out I'm fucked!

One last question! How would Jackie's personals ad read?

My name is Jackie. I am 26 years old. I have brown hair, brown eyes, and I'm looking for a guy who does the finer things in life like me.

That's truth in advertising! Thanks.





Get a Load of Sherry Vine

A Fabulous Drag Life Examined

Interview by Lois Commondenominator

Sherry Vine is the sex-kitten creation of Keith Levy. As Sherry, Keith has appeared in a number of plays, including one of his recent smash hits, 'Kitty Killer,' which he helped to write. He also recently appeared here in West Hollywood with Jackie Beat in another hilarious hit, 'Double Wide Female.' He also sings in clubs and is known for his outrageous lyrics. When Keith is Sherry, anything goes!

Lois: We're sitting here with the fabulous Sherry Vine at the French Market restaurant, and it's a pretty, summery Wednesday night in the middle of West Hollywood.

Sherry: In the Year of Our Lord 1995

Tell us first what you're known for.

Well, it's a little bit of everything. I started off singing live because I wanted to do something different, and I sucked at lip syncing and impersonating. I've always wanted to sing live anyway. There was always something in the fact that singing live dressed up as a woman would get me more attention than as a man. It started really kind of as a joke, then it turned into a little bit more of a career. I was living in L.A. and started doing a lot of shows at clubs with Jackie Beat. Then I moved to New York and started a Theatre Company with Douglas Sanders, Joey Gross and Josh Rosenzweig called Theatre Couture. We just finished our fifth show, and that's what I do. I still do club things as a means to make money. It's fun, I love it but it's a job.

What are some of the names of the shows that you have been doing?

We did *The Bad Weed*, '73, which we just did in Los Angeles in February featuring Jackie Beat and Mistress Formika. That was written by Douglas Sanders who has passed away. He has written all the shows up to *Kitty Killer*, which is one that we just finished. We did *E.S.P.*, also known as *Eyes of a Supermodel Psychic*; we did *The Final Feast of Lucrezia Borgia*, which also starred Mistress Formika; Lily of the Valley; Mark Allen who is Go-Go Boy of the Year in Manhattan, and we just finished *Kitty Killer* which was a one-person performance but certainly a collaboration. I was the performer and Josh directed it, Joey Gross was in it, Joe Kelly did all the videos. Joe Kelly has gained some underground notoriety for a film he did called *Skull Fuck*, which played all over the world at different festivals including the Whitney Museum, and it was quite controversial.

I saw you perform a song the other night at Dragstrip 66. What was that song called?

Lonely Nights. It's a Captain and Tennille song. I was able to get a copy of the karaoke version and changed the words. The new version is called "Shit On My Face, Keanu Reeves." There's a few people out there who might not know that I am completely infatuated with Keanu.

Do you think he's Gay?

No. There have been a lot of rumors, but that's all. He was on the cover of *OUT* magazine the straight issue. I think it's really cool that he says that he's not Gay but if he was that it wouldn't be a bad thing. I don't think he's gay, but I believe that if he met me, he'd fall in love with me.

Is that the kind of a song that you would normally perform?

It depends on the venue. Last year at Wigstock, I did "Me and Keanu Reeves" to the tune of "Me and Bobby McGee." That was my signature song last year in New York. I'm in the Wigstock movie but briefly. They couldn't get the rights to that song, I do a whole Edith Piaf medley. I do torch songs.

What are the best places to shop for good Drag in New York?

It depends on what you want to spend. One of my favorite places is Patricia Fields on 8th. They always have a wide variety of clothes and people can sometimes get a deal. They always have the best selection of shoes and the right sizes.

Like really large sizes?

Well, I have small feet, a 10 in lady's, so it's never been a problem for me, but I think they go up to size 12. They've always got a huge selection of pantyhose, gloves, jewelry and accessories. Upstairs, they have Perfidia's Hair World. She's one of the best, Perfidia and Shannon in New York for styling wigs, although Bobby Miller does most of my hair. He's a genius. He does a lot of stuff for Lady Bunny. He's brilliant.

Is it your intention to be taken as a real woman or do you want guys to know you're a Drag Queen?
No, I'm kidding! I'm a man in a dress.

So, you don't lounge around the house in a dress.
Absolutely not! When I perform on stage, I want there to be a thin line for people to let go of their disbelief and saying, "Oh, Sherry Vine's a real person," and kind of getting caught up with it. I hope that's what happens. When the show ends, I hope they get that what they saw was a performer/character actor.

But you're very convincing. I mean, you don't have a beard, you don't show a bulge in your basket. I don't know if you tape, but it looks smooth. Maybe I haven't seen you in any dresses that are that revealing.

No, I don't tape. I've worn some things that are real tight and it is a lot of work to smooth it all out.

What I'm saying is that you look like a diva or a woman of some type.

Thank you. I like to look as nice as I can sometimes, and sometimes I like to look trashy, depending on what the occasion is.

Any beauty tips?

I just wear a little powder. That's all I need. Just a little powder and a little lipstick. Well, they're probably not secrets to any Queen. I don't get much facial hair but I do get a little bit. I just put a little red lipstick over that area. Red takes out the blue of the beard. That's why you should never let them put a red light on you on stage. It washes the makeup right off and all you can see is the beard. Dermablend is the best cover. I cover everything and start with a blank canvas.

What about your eyebrows? They look very nicely shaped.

They're a little thick, but I like that. I don't want to shave them off. I think it's great that some people do, like Mistress Formika and Jackie Beat. Sometimes when I'm in Drag I wish that I

shaved them off 'cause it looks so gorgeous, but then I think I don't want to go around all day without eyebrows but that's just me

What's in your purse when you go out?

A gun, a switchblade, a crack pipe. No! Lipstick compact, lip liner, ID, money, keys, and tapes for the show.

And no cigarettes because you don't smoke in New York, but you do smoke while you're here on vacation. You told me that you smoke only in L.A. 'cause it's a vacation thing to do.

It's naughty and stupid, I know.

Where did you go to school?

I went to undergraduate school at the University of Maryland in Baltimore where I grew up. I majored in theater, and then I went to graduate school at U.S.C. out here and got my Masters Of Fine Art in Acting. I lived here a few years before I moved to New York.

You dress like no other woman would dress. What is a normal outfit for you?

Lately it keeps evolving. From a cocktail waitress look into a tattered glamour look. Sometimes I like to do a rock and roll hooker look. Mostly, I hate to say this and not to offend women, and I know this is probably what a lot of women have a problem with, but I'd rather dress like a hooker than a secretary. Like wearing hot pink short shorts and some sexy little top, big hair, high heels, long nails.

You're very slender. Do you know what size in women's clothes you wear?

Four! No, that's a lie. I don't know actually. I know I'm thin. I know I don't wear a four, but let's pretend that I do.

Do you have any trouble putting any of your makeup on?

I've gotten the eyelashes down. I have a horrible time with liquid eyeliner so I almost never wear it unless someone else does it for me. I'll use powder or nothing at all 'cause one side will get bigger, then the other will get bigger, then I'll go back and forth until my eyes are covered in liner. The hardest thing for me to learn was lining my lips with lip liner. For years I didn't line my lips. Mistress Formika used to go crazy and finally I started practicing, and now I can do it. The eyebrows are another difficult part. They've always been a thorn in my side, because no matter what I do, my face is a little uneven. Bobby Miller says I have a Picasso face. So I usually wear wigs with bangs that cover them a little bit. I've tried everything like wax and such, and if I didn't pluck them a little like this, there would be one huge caterpillar right across my forehead. I started plucking them when I was thirteen, way before I ever thought of Drag. I didn't want to look like Satan.

Is your family involved in your life?

Well, my mom, my aunt and my great aunt just came in to see *Kitty Killer* in New York, and they saw it twice they loved it so much. It was a won-

derful experience! They were nothing but proud. And then I talked to my dad on the phone after my mom went back and showed him the program and the stuff that was in *New York* magazine and everything, and he said, "Now, your mother said that you thought I'd be upset because you're a Drag Queen." And I said, "Yeah." And he said "Why would I care if you're a Drag Queen? As long as you're happy and healthy I don't care what you do." I'm very lucky. They couldn't have been more supporting and unconditional about the whole "Gay coming out thing."

Kitty Killer sounds like a dark comedy. Would you say that you put a twist on the pieces that you've been in? Perhaps twisted?

Absolutely! As much as possible. *E.S.P.* was kind of a take off on *Mahogany* meets *Eyes of Laura Mars*. I played a young photographer who ends up by accident becoming the world's top super-model who has visions of her best friends being murdered.

Is a lot of it a vehicle for you or do these have political statements as well?

Absolutely. *The Bad Weed*, *E.S.P.* and *Lucretia* were all written by Douglas Sanders who passed away in January. They were all saying something even if it wasn't com-

pletely obvious. *The Bad Weed* is hysterical bathroom humor but it's making a comment.

I thought it was making fun of drug paranoia that the Republicans are going through.

Yes, like *Reefer Madness* meets *The Bad Seed*. It's also making comments on traditional family values, what defines a family. It certainly was not written as a political statement. It was written to be funny.

Say, didn't you tell me you used to work here at



the French Market for a while?

Shhh! Yes, I worked at The French Market for about a year and a half with Candace Cane. This was how we met.

Candace Cane is another fabulous personality.

What does she do?

She's everywhere. She's a big star. She dances. She has legs like nobody's business. She dances really well, which you can see in the Wigstock movie.

By the way, I think I mis-identified a picture of Candace Cane as you in the last issue of Dragazine.

Yes, that's a picture of Candace with my name under it. I took it as a complement, although she should. No, I'm only kidding!

Candace does have a great set of gams. I saw her perform here in town once. I don't want you to give away any secrets, but she was so beautiful and real looking! Does she augment to look more *she*? Not at all. Everyone thinks that because she has a very full figure.

Do you wear padding?

I do not. Just boobs with little nipples. I wear a wonderbra. Usually you can pull your skin together and get that illusion of cleavage, but I can't even do that. It's just a thin layer of skin wrapped around my ribs.

Do you draw in a little cleavage?

I don't even bother. I put the falsies in for contour to fill in the dress.

You were saying that you don't have any chest hair. Very little. Almost none. I pluck what few I have out and it makes it easy.

Tell us more about your makeup regimen.

I use Dermablend P5 as my base which is a little dark because I like looking a little tan. I used to go lighter but then I saw pictures people took of me at clubs and when it's not great lighting you look like a ghost or you can see the makeup line. So I started wearing a little more natural colors. I use a light powder for contouring. I focus mostly on the eyes and lips, and I'm now into wearing a lot of bright colors. I briefly went through that phase of wearing natural makeup, but I like wearing a lot of makeup. I like ten different colors of pinks on my face!

I'm currently doing the brown eye shadow thing.

Look at Candace's picture. She's got great lips and fabulous eyebrows, and I think that's gorgeous, but I like looking like a Drag Queen. Especially for the stage, I'm really into pink right now, pink eyes, blush lips. I try to wear a lot of makeup and still look pretty, but it's still obvious who and what I am. Look at The "Lady" Bunny. There's a picture of her in the New York magazine parody issue of *Vanity Fair*, and she looks gorgeous! Huge hair, ten pairs of eyelashes, but she looks gorgeous! She doesn't look like a real woman. She looks like a beautiful Drag Queen, and I love that!

Yes, she does. You mean, she's not a real woman?

Oh, shh! I forgot! She just got back from Belgium. She's a real woman now. But there's some people that I've learned a lot from. Miss Guy certainly has taught me a lot. She did my makeup for the New York magazine shoot and the *Kitty Killer* flier. Again, she likes the look where it's obvious you're wearing makeup, but she knows how to do it so that it's blended and contoured.

What's the name of the theater you're in now?

We're at P.S. 122. That stands for Performance Space 122 in the East Village.

And you mentioned that's where Ethyl Eichelberger performed before.

Yes, and we just did *Kitty Killer* there, and we've already booked our next show which is called *Charlie* for April of 1996 in that space. *Charlie* is like *Charlie's Angels*, but these angels work for Charlie Manson, kidnap the Charlie Girl heiress, torture and brainwash her into killing her father. It's a takeoff of *Charlie's Angels*. *Charlie Girl* perfume and the Patty Hearst kidnapping. Josh who directed it is great at story. His boyfriend Erik, who

"I'm Amish. Sherry Vine was born in Amish country."

writes as Fletcher Forest for (the now defunct) *Yes Magazine* in Los Angeles, is great with concept. Between the three of us, we'll put it together. It's so rare that you get a group of people who find each other and come together and all have the same vision, the same sense of humor, who all are going for the same thing. I think that's why it's all happening so quickly for us.

How do you know what the audience is looking for?

I think we defined our audience and broadened it without compromise. Erik wants to write a very modern adaptation of *A Doll's House*, called *Doll*, with Sherry Vine as Nora, and it all takes place in a Barbie traveling case. A very modern, loose adaptation. But we keep thinking, well, maybe we should wait because we don't want to alienate the audience that we've gotten from plays like *E.S.P.* With *Kitty Killer* we got a good review in the *New York Times* and it all went boom! There would be nights where I didn't know one person in the audience.

What about video?

It's all been videotaped and Josh is editing it. This will be the first one that we'll try to market. We don't have a distributor yet, but the main reason we're doing the video is because I want to do a tour. We're touring in Vermont in September, then Cleveland, and hopefully Los Angeles, Minneapolis and Miami.

Are you getting any financial support from the National Endowment for the Arts?

No. I wish! N.E.A. is going to be gone by the

time we're eligible. Anyway, in the spring we're doing the *Charlie* show, then in summer we're going to be in Edinburgh with *Kitty Killer*.

Do you get rich off of a tour like that?

Oh, God no! I paid for *Kitty Killer* with my own money. That's how it has to be done when you're starting out.

How old are you, or can we say?

Twenty-two.

I don't know how I'll be able to describe just how you said that. Well, perhaps Sherry Vine is twenty-two, but Keith is another age.

Right. Keith is one year older. Ohhh.

Did you know what was happening in New York? Did it draw you like a magnet?

I moved to New York in December of 1991. What had happened was that I had gone the year before to do a play as a boy. I had just finished doing *The Undead* in Los Angeles, the play that Dennis Cooper wrote. Dennis is known as "The Bad Boy of Gay Lit." It was produced by the Mark Taper. I was also doing another show at P.S. 122 in New York and saw a show with RuPaul and Mona Foot, and I kept thinking that I'd never seen Drag like this before. I've always been interested, but I'd never done it. I thought this could be something different and something to explore. I came back to L.A. and I had seen Gender and Chi Chi La Rue in West Hollywood. Gender was appearing at the Four Star and I had seen some shows there, and then I had seen Vaginal Creme Davis and I was blown away. I have been a fan of hers for 6 or 7 years. I had not yet met Jackie Beat, but I was ready to try this new type of Drag. I started and it all happened very fast. All of the sudden, I think I just got on the tip of the wave because clubs wanted it, people wanted it, and I was right there. When Jackie and I finally met, we were performing all of the time.

Any advice to up-and-coming talent?

People ask me, and I try not to sound pretentious, but I think the important thing is to be unique, but yes, it's also good to imitate quality. Many people tell me I remind them of Carol Burnett, and I know that's all I watched growing up, so even if it's not conscious, I know that her qualities are there. Find something and make it your own.

Is there something we don't know about you that we forgot to ask?

I'm Amish. Sherry Vine was born in Amish country.

What's happening with you in 1996?

I'll be at Wigstock every Labor Day in New York, and we're doing a new show at the Westbeth Theater. Kevin Mahoney is producing it. He is the one who's directed Lipsynka's shows. It's very exciting because we've only been doing this for 2 1/2 years and we're moving along so fast.

Well, our time has certainly gone way too fast! Thanks for the great interview!

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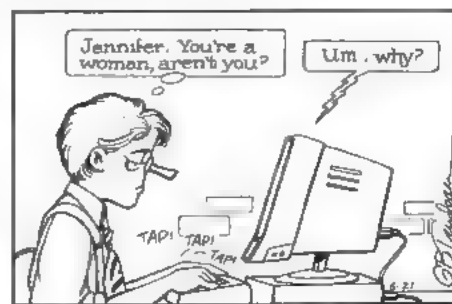
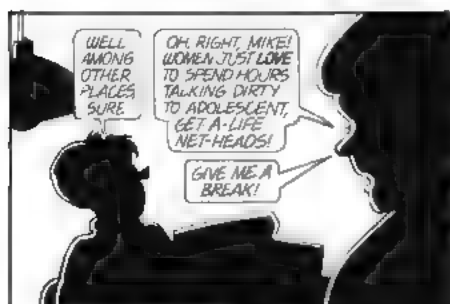
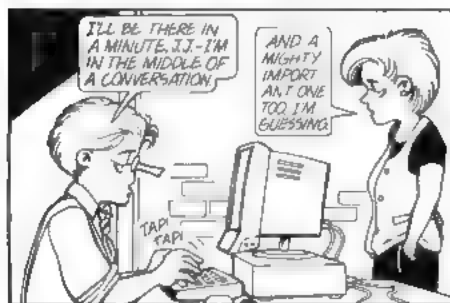
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► Photographer John Paschal posed for a mugshot and fingerprints at the Red Dress Party



► Coffee perks up at the Dungeons & Drag Queens Halloween Dragstrip 66 party



▼ Bi coastal Bili Holiday channeler Joey Arias appeared at the APLA benefit premiere performance of "Wigstock, The Movie"



▼ Glamorous Monique Spice De Chambers vied for Best Female Impersonator Contest of California



▲ Brent Allen doubled as Bette Midler at The Wrapper Party

▲ Ship's Madam Lucia Porcini wrapped it up at The Wrapper Party



▲ Jewelry designer Helen Heels dripping in zircons at The Wrapper Party

Who's That Drag Queen?

The L. A. Drag Scene

photos by Lois Commondenominator

▼ Tonya wants to know when you'll be joining in on the fun at Dragstrip 667



▲ Night blooming Go Go dancer and flower arranger Christina Dahling stole the scene at Tommy Tang's Wigstock Cast Party

► Accessory maven Diamonelle was one of the glitterati on Santa Monica Blvd. for Halloween '95



▲ For a construction worker, Lola Palooza gave good lipsynch at Sugar Shack

► Tina served the teaming hoards as one of the Drag Queen hostesses at Tommy Tang's for Tuesday Nights



▲ Dark and lovely canarie (and sometime journalist) Erin Crystal chowed down at the Wigstock Cast Party at Tommy Tang's

◀ Gen tally famous Karen Dior soaked up the ambience at the Wigstock Cast Party at Tommy Tang's





◀ Party designer **Bradley Picklesheimer** showed a little pink at the Red Dress Party



▼ Imperial Court Empress **Coco La Chine** was ready for her close-up at The Imperial Movie Capital Court's coronation ceremony



◀ Honey baked blond **Pagan Holiday** hamming it up as Mistress of Ceremonies in a comedy review at the Belly Room of the Comedy Store, featuring Barbra by Halstead, Misty Cologne and others.



▼ Honorary Drag Queen & TV Epic Magazine's **Marlena Lacey** supplied copies of Transformation Magazine at the Wigstock Cast Party at Tommy Tang's



▲ X-cellent Pom director **Gender** entertained us at The Wrapper Party

► Santa Monica Boulevard on Halloween was the place to be Here's 'Pup' as Marilyn Monroe



▼ **Sunflower au Go Go** was also one of the celebrity judges at Wigfest '95

▼ **René Sauvage** at Tommy Tang's on Tuesdays, just before she broke her foot while Drag skydiving for charity



▼ **BUTT OF COURSE!** It's **Bunny Frost** (on her knees again) for Halloween '95 on Santa Monica Blvd



▼ New York native **Msstress Formika** danced until she saw the crack of dawn (or was that someone named Don?) at Bay's Town's Axis Club



▼ West Hollywood Cheer Leader **Popcorn Lycra** put on the feedbag at Tommy Tang's Wigstock Cast Party



◀ Publisher and yours truly, **Lois Commondenominator**, reciting dirty limericks on stage in the Belly Room of the Comedy Store



► Queens came out for Project Angel Food at Wigfest '95 at Micky's, including contestant **Mona Stat Seven**

Decked out as his turban-wearing alter ego, Eartha Madre leads the audience in her version of a Hindu fire ritual called "Eartha Madre Lights Your Fire." She symbolically burns up old ways that hold us all back in life and sets free secret desires that could liberate us to attain our highest potential. The fire represents both the destructive side of our personalities as well as the positive influences in our lives. It's all quite illuminating!



Getting Earthy with Eartha Madre

Drag Queen Shamaness Eartha Madre Lights Our Fire

Performance Artist Christopher Doggett Explains The Inspiration Behind Starring In His Own One-Woman Show

Interviewed by Lois Commondenominator

First, tell us a bit about Chris Doggett. What is your background and theatrical training?

I'm from Rochester, New York, and moved to Los Angeles about five years ago from the mountains of New Mexico. I studied theater in New Mexico, then I got involved in dream work in Mexico. I came to Los Angeles and got hooked up with Highways in Santa Monica in Tim Miller's Gay Men's Performance Workshop series. I did that religiously. He was a little guru for me, and I went every Tuesday. I wasn't really planning on doing that at first. I thought I'd end up in traditional theater, but performance art became a much more viable form of my expression. Then, I had these dual things happening with my performance art and my dream work, and they started coming together in this Eartha Madre character. All my performances are based on dreams as well as my interpretations of them, and all the other little things that happen along the way.

Tell us more about dream work. Do you help people understand their dreams?

Yes, I do dream analysis, helping people understand that their dreams are really messages from that deep place that I call Inner Self. It's that part within you that knows everything. Dreams come from that formless, transcendental aspect of you and make a little movie of what you need to know. It all has a theme, and I help people understand what the theme is.

What is the theme of your show?

Hopefully the audience can make their most outrageous dream of what they want to do with their lives come true. That's what Eartha did, and that's what Chris did. I made Eartha happen. The idea is that they get to see Eartha's journey to inspire them to offer up their dream to the fire. The show becomes experiential by breaking down the fourth wall between the performer and the audience. The very nature of the fire ritual is participation, so it's not being a voyeur but experiencing it.

How did you develop the character Eartha Madre?

I did one little Drag performance before I created Eartha. Eartha was born in January of 1993 on the occasion of the first Dragstrip 66 in Los Angeles. A friend of mine invited me to go, so I

just grabbed the one dress I had in the closet which was a "mother of the groom" dress. It was from this earlier performance that I did in Drag where I played a Jewish mother in a show called "Gay Company." In the show, I and four other Jewish mothers have just come from a wedding and we sing the song "You Really Ought to Get Married" about wanting our gay sons to get married. So I pulled out this dress and was going over to my friend's to get dressed, but then I thought, "Wait a minute! What's going to be my theme of this character? I think that way, about underlying themes, because of my dream work. So I took out my Mother Peace tarot card deck and I pulled a card, and it was the High Priestess. I then looked in the little book to see what it meant since I'm not a real professional tarot reader, and it said something about the Great Earth Mother. Oh! Eartha Madre! That would be a good name! So that was actual when she was born. I also had a feeling that Eartha Madre was taking care of all of her Drag Queen daughters that night as this shamaness earth mother type. That night we did this little chant to get us centered before we went out. I call it the Turbo Pussy Chant where we put our hands together and chant "Turbo Pussy, Turbo Pussy, Turbo Pussy!" Eartha helps you get in touch with your inner pussy; that place where all of your creative juices flow from. So we squatted a little bit and formed a circle and chanted, feeling that creative juice from within.

Eartha certainly was a vision, especially with those large breasts. Tell us about them.

In the very beginning of the performance, I talk about fitting in, like sacred rice I poured into the triple D-cups of my lavish breasts. They were inspired by Paula, who was this college girl who took care of me when I was a little boy. I talk about her as a trailer-park foster mamma. She was poor and got to live with us for free by taking care of the kids and washing the dishes and all that. She was also fat, but she had very large, large, large breasts. Maybe even larger than Eartha's, now that I think about it. One thing I learned from Paula was the glory of large breasts. She wore these little poor boy shirts that were short-sleeve, ribbed crew-neck tops, and she got a lot of dates with a lot of skinny guys. Those skinny guys loved those large

breasts' So I learned from Paula that even fat girls can get dates. Now that I'm in my 40's, I'm having to use that a little bit.

Although you're not a singer, you sang in the show in a particular style that worked for you. How would you describe it?

When I first recorded "Just Like A Woman" I wanted to sing like Judy Collins. I wanted to sound like a beautiful woman, but it sounded like screeching, so luckily I had good music people there and they said, Chris, just go into your lower register. Be more like Leonard Cohen, talking like Lou Reed. Your low register is very resonant and it's very you and it's very sweet and real. I had to let go of my glorious diva thing.

Where did you get the special effects psychedelic projection that you used in the piece?

I wanted to have a Lou Reed/Velvet Underground psychedelic light show behind my Edie Sedgwick segment when she was singing. It turned out that it was really expensive and this was a totally no-budget deal. My director suggested John Burnside, who is one of the original Radical Faeries. He invented this thing called the Symetrix back in the '60s. It projects a moving kaleidoscope with actual cut-glass pieces in it onto a wall. It was used in TV and rock shows back in the '60s. We called him up and he was just thrilled and honored and excited to be a part of the show. He said, "Whatever you need behind Edie, we'll just make sure it happens."

One of the things you told me you did before the night of the show was to get shaved from head to toe. Was that an essential part of the show?

Eartha was originally hirsute - hairy, as they say. I didn't know what that meant until *Detour* magazine referred to Eartha that way. I used to like the hairy Drag Queen gender-fuck thing, but I realized that it was all a part of resisting my feminine, so I started shaving a little bit here and there. There is a part in the show where Edie finishes her song and comes back downstage and becomes Eartha. That's done in a ritual form of bathing as done in Hindu culture. That's bathing and washing all of the impurities of the day so that you can be a pure vessel to take in and do the ritual. We had my attendant Indira undress me as Edie. She took off my little bra and since I was going to be totally naked except for some silk boxer shorts, I decided I wanted to shave my whole body. It's hard for me to shave certain parts of myself easily if you know what I mean, so I went to *Frontiers* magazine and looked up Personal Services and found people who shave people. There's a whole thing about erotic shaving. It's \$20 for butt and balls, \$35 for back and butt. I wanted a full body shave. So I called one of the ads and told him that I was doing this performance and I needed a full body shave because it was about this Drag Queen. I offered to give him an ad in my program and a credit in the video for his services, and he said sure. That was a fun experience. I went over and he's built and tan with a blond buzz cut in white jockey shorts. I've never been

shaved before, and it was quite erotic. First, I took off all my clothes. He asked me to shave my arms and legs first before he came over because that was a lot of work and I could do those myself. He shaved my crotch first with a buzz clipper then my lower back and my butt. Usually when I shave my legs but I don't shave my butt - it looks like I have a fur bikini. It feels funny when you're shaved. My thighs are kind of thunderous, so when they're shaved and I'm walking and it's hot here in Los Angeles, it gets all sweaty and I can easily get a heat rash that's not that attractive. So I had to plan my shaving right before my performance so I wouldn't have this rash. I was going to get waxed because I like the sensation of waxing, but I didn't want to get a full body wax because I can get some weird bumps from that. Then, after he finished with the clipper, he took me into the bedroom and layed me down on the bed. He then got down to the shaving cream and baby oil and razor thing.



I just layed there and he leaned against my inner thigh with his hot, muscular body and soaped me up and shaved me. It was worth every penny! The shaving was quite lavish, and ended with a special treat!

You do something both fun and scary at the end. Tell us about that.

The ending of the piece is really fun. I'm behind the fire altar, which is this two-foot-high stone altar with a fire going in it that I'm feeding with all these Indian magic herbs. After that's all over, I just stand up, take a few steps back from the altar, take a running jump in my long, glorious robes, and jump horizontally over the fire, and am caught by four people. They catch me and lower me at the same time down to the floor in a pranam (devotional posture) toward the audience. It's something I learned from another guru of mine, Mehmet Sanders, an incredibly bold Turkish queer movement artist based in Los Angeles. Mehmet said that I could do that without anybody catching me, that I could just jump straight over the altar and land

flat. Well, I think I'm going to have to take a few more workshops with old Mehmet. Maybe some personal coaching from him too might get me through it. I've done a shorter version of this performance before where people caught me, but in this one we had a four-camera shoot, music scoring happening, and everything was last minute. We hadn't rehearsed the jump, but I had mentioned it to the musicians months before. We just hadn't really gotten to that point. And there I was the day of it all, and I'm reminding them about it, and they're freaking "We can't do that!" I seriously considered just doing a high jump and leaping over the fire, but it doesn't have quite the effect. Luckily, right before the show opened, the house was still closed and some friends of mine came back stage. I said, "You guys! You're going to catch me!" There were two of them, and then my director, and one other. In three minutes, we practiced the leap. First just practicing it without the altar. It really is a simple thing, it's just a scary idea more than anything. It's really in the body of what the piece is all about. You can leap into the unknown, which is your dreams.

Is this the famous "leap of faith"?

Yes it is. The faith in your own Inner Self.

The faith in your friends that they'll catch you!

Yes, that's what it takes too. The faith that something is going to catch you. Even wimps can do it. It's not even the catch. It's a beautiful metaphor in a way because you leap, and all they really do is break your fall. If they actually caught you, their backs would be thrown out. All they do the minute you touch their arms, is they lower you flat to the floor. They never really catch you. It does feel like a leap of faith, because once you really leap, you're barreling through the air across the fire altar, and you don't know if your beautiful robes made of silver metallic material will go up in flames or what, or knock over the props. You take a few running steps, kick up those skirts, and jump, honey! It's a glorious feeling, really, because you plan on them catching you, but once you're in the air you really don't know if it will work or not. It did, and the first thing that I saw when I lifted my head up was that I was at the feet of a blonde woman, and she had this look of horror in her face. She must have thought I was going to land in her lap. I can imagine what she thought when she saw this mad Drag Queen come flying through the air over the fire. She didn't know what was going to happen!

What is going to happen for Eartha? Will we be able to get the video by mail order?

Hopefully it will be ready by the time this interview is published, showing at film festivals around the world with Eartha's live show touring the globe as well.

Any final thoughts you'd like to impart?

Just that both Eartha and I welcome everyone to sing and dance, but most of all, to impregnate your most secret fantasies and give them life as we both have done!



*Drag Queen-Hosted
Cable Cooking Shows
Will Never Be the Same!*

Do You Know Wenda Watch?

Do You Know Wenda Watch" is an ongoing 5 minute cooking show segment of San Francisco's favorite Gay/Lesbian cable TV Show, Lavender Lounge. Wenda Watch was a simple Oklahoman housewife with a fabulous cable cooking show broadcasting her signal from her satellite dish located at her mobile home somewhere in Oklahoma, when one day it interrupted Lavender Lounge's regular programming. After a few episodes, Lavender Lounge host Mark Kleim loved Wenda so much that he called her and explained the situation. Wenda was more than happy to "beam out" at specific times in the program. All is well now and Wenda's fame

in San Francisco is beginning to exceed her local notoriety. She still isn't quite sure what Lavender Lounge is and secretly believes Mr. Kleim could very well be stalking her.

So here she is, writing exclusively for *Dragazine*!

Well Hi Babies! It's me Wenda Watch! Lover of Food! Lover of Friends! Lover of fingering the " " key! I'm here before you now to entertain, to enlighten, to ensure that your cholesterol level doesn't dip below 250! Yes it seems the publisher of *Dragazine*, old Lois Commondenominator herself, has asked me to write a kind of household hint/recipe sensation column based on my hit TV Show "Do You

Photo Credits: Brian Ashby

Know Wenda Watch?" (Tuesday nights at Ten, Channel 47 on Lavender Lounge)

The first recipe I want to share with you is a pure inspiration! I figured, dear reader, that if your husband is a drag racer, he must have lots of tools lying around the house, or if you, sweet Dragazine reader, are the drag racer herself, you do too! So I got to thinking: Wenda honey your ol' husband Burl's got a shed full a tools goin unused and maybe they can get a little use outta you for a change. This is the product of my inspiration, imagination, and too much coffee. I call it

CHEESY DOGS A LA WENDA

1 package of Hot Dogs (duh!)
1 package of Hot Dog Buns
Any condiments you may like on your weenies (please make sure weenies always have a condiment on them)
Some canned aerosol Squeeze Cheese
1 Black and Decker SL4 power drill with a 3/8" bit

Now cut off the end of your weenie package. This should keep them held together and yet accessible. (Sort of like a bra!) Now drill a hole in the end of each weenie, being sure to wipe the excess Hot Dog "curls" off your bit after each drill.

Now take your squirt cheese and fill each weenie with the cheese using the hole you just drilled. Now cook as usual. (That is fry, bake or grill, cause if you boil or microwave you are screwed.)

Here is a quick and easy recipe, especially if you or a loved one partied too much the night before and need a soberin' up before church. It's called

PORK BACK AND KRAUT ALA WENDA

1 1/2 lbs pork back
Two cans of extra fancy sour kraut (la tee da)
Some extra sesame seeds

The extra sesame seeds were to be the "ala Wenda" part, but I couldn't really find any, so I just picked some off

the top of old Burl's sloppy joe bun tops. I mean, they just get caught in his bridgework anyway. So, what you wanna do is boil your meat until it turns that blueish gray color and pulls away from the little piggy vertebrae nice and easy. Takes about twenty minutes. Now, what I like to do is save my extra pork drippings. It makes an excellent lubricant on squeaky doors, adds that added fat to recipes that is so hard to find nowadays and ladies it makes and excellent hot oil hair treatment. What you wanna do is let this cool down, spoon of the congealed part, microwave this until it is runny again. (Not too hot! Pork burns are the shits.) Now wash your hair, put it on, let dry and then set and do one of my pork treatments. After a beer rinse, I end up smellin' like my husband on a Saturday night! Girl, you don't know! Another good thing to save is the juice that's been drained off from canned corn. Warmed up, it makes an excellent broth on a cold day, adds zest to any recipe, and old Burl in there likes to mix it with vodka to make what he likes to call "A laundiced Mary."

OK, OK! Back to the dish. Now pick the meat from the vertebrae, add two cans of the sour kraut and your extra sesame

SPAM CORNPATCH CASSEROLE

2 cups egg noodles
1 can whole kernel corn
1 can vegetable soup
3/4 cup milk
1 bag mixed frozen veggies
1/2 brick Velveeta
1 can Spam

seeds. Boil it for 20 minutes and that's dinner! Now the hangover remedy comes here. I make this dish every Monday afternoon for my girlfriend Clarice LaDue, the world famous lounge singer. She comes over every Monday for aspirin, pork back and a shoulder 'cause she knows I've got all three. Like most extremely talented artists, Clance has been known to imbibe. So have your friend, in my case Clance, serve the dish letting the kraut steam open their pores and relax their tired, puffy eyes. Then, as they eat a few bites, to be polite, the nausea becomes overwhelming and after a quick trot to the loo your friend will be like new! Mission accomplished and you've still got dinner for later!

I have a special treat for my debut article for Dragazine! I am going to reveal for the first time ever my recipe for Spam Cornpatch Casserole. This dish has won the blue ribbon in the "alternative meat" category for the last four county fairs. There are women out there who have offered MONEY for the secrets to this dish, but now here it is for the first time in print, for free. Enjoy!

Now, boil your noodles for about 10 minutes, drain and pour into your casserole. Now add everything else. For a hearty country feel, I like to hand crumble my Spam and Velveeta. Bake that in a 350 degree oven for 20 minutes and Voila! Alternative Meat Delight!

Anyhoo Babies, that's about it for me. I've got a baby cryin', laundry to fold and my sister-in-law Myrna needs a perm, so for now Good-bye, and Good Eats!

If you want to write to Wenda for any reason at all, send it to:

Wenda Watch
c/o The Lavender Lounge
2300 Market St., Suite 29
San Francisco, CA 94114





Candy Ass

Gets Graphic

Interview with a Drag Go-Go Dancer
by Lois Commondenominator

Candy Ass is the outrageous fleshpot alter ego of graphic artist Brian McCarthy. In his guise as Candy, Brian appears as a Drag go-go dancer at nightclubs, fronts for a punk pop band and is known for being the constant companion of two other fabulous Drag personalities, Jackie Beat and Eva Destruction.

Candy is a different kind of Drag Queen, she doesn't tuck and she doesn't wear falsies. Candy blends genders, but the result is not a smooth mixture. Candy has a rough edge, and that's why Candy is dandy!

Who is the fabulous Candy Ass?

The *fabulous* Candy Ass? It's more like the *notorious* Candy Ass! She's a little more notorious than fabulous darling. She has a reputation to uphold. Candy's kind of a Freak of the Week, as they say. That's how it all started. As Jackie Beat once said, "She's the car crash that you just can't help but slow down and stare at. Always loved and hated but never ignored. That's because I may be an actor but the only acting I like to do is acting like Candy Ass, and that is being the ultimate vicious, adulterous, lecherous, sexualized creature. Candy Ass to me is just this bizarre metamorphosis of male/female energy. She's the synthesis of both sexualities colliding. I just love to portray raw sexuality! I think all Drag is performance art, but that's not what Candy Ass is all about. I'm into the whole *Pulopunk* movement. I love fucking with people really hard in the head so that they can question their own sexuality."

What were you like as a kid?

I'm from the Motor City Detroit, Michigan. People are so uptight and worried there about what other people might think or what the family might think or what the wife might think, but I was born to rebel! My conservative Catholic parents sent me to St. Thomas Aquinas Private Catholic School. Although kids there were a little tamer than in regular schools when it came to teasing and taunting Gay kids. I was definitely known as "the little fairy." I had Billy Mummy *Lost In Space* orange hair! I was the artist of my group while all the others became factory rats growing up in a company town like Detroit. I was the Allen Carr wanna-be and did all the talent shows and wrote everything. At the talent shows, I would do Elton John impersonations and was obsessed with anything that was gitty and glamorous and Hollywood.

Did you study dancing in school?

As a boy, I studied jazz, modern, and ballet, but I didn't have the patience to compete at it professionally. I could do my artwork in my sleep

and it didn't take any effort. I still kept my involvement in theater and dance companies in high school and college and had a number of friends go to dance auditions and try for that dream. It takes a real concentration and I was always a weird-ass punk, so I hated ballet class.

What got you into Drag go-go dancing?

In the spring of 1993, I started out being a boy dancer at Club Meat. They hired me to be a little leather boy with the usual props and accessories, and it was fun but it was so boring after a while with the same mundane thing. I'm a commercial artist and went to school to do my graphics and art, so it was very natural for me to eventually start painting my face. The real thing that started it was that I got a black eye from my old boyfriend. I had to dance the next night at Meat after I got that black eye and I was so vain but I wanted to do it and this black eye wasn't going to stop me and I thought fuck it. I must go to put makeup all over this and give myself two huge purple retarded eyes. I had a wig from some Halloween that I did Drag and thought I'll just do something really freaky. It was very Tim Curry because I wore all the leather boy stuff but I also looked like some androgynous wanna-be monster.

How did you become friends with Eva Destruction and Jackie Beat?

I first got to know Eva, who is Alexis Arquette, at his Club Meat where I was dancing. He was there that night that I had my black eye, and tripping and freaking out over me like What The Fuck Is That? I talked with him and eventually met Jackie Beat at the last Flirt party at the Palace where she was performing a few years ago. She had never really seen me, and it was the first time I did full-on diva Drag with a gown and hair. It was very *Valley of the Dolls* with a strawberry blonde wig stacked really high and all these ridiculous jewels. When Jackie saw me she looked at me weird because the clique they were in was established for some time and I just

kind of appeared on her doorstep looking like the diva wanna-be. We met there and she said "Who are you? I've never seen you." And I said "Well, my name is Brian." And she said "Well, where do you perform?" And I said, "Well, this is really the first time I've ever done all this." She didn't believe me then I started to tell her how much I loved reading her stuff in magazines and how I loved her music video "Vogue" parody of Madonna's "Vogue" and how I laughed so hard because I had never seen anything else like it on television or film. It was just hysterical to see someone rip all of these B-movie losers to shreds like that.

How did you get the name Candy Ass?

Jackie Beat gave me the name Candy Ass. Jackie was chowing down on some burritos I had just fetched for her and she said "Oh! Oh! I have this great idea!" And I said "What?" And she showed me this stack of fliers and she said "I'm opening this club the first week in July called Candy. I need a mascot! You could be Candy. Just take this stack of fliers and walk up to everyone and hand them a flier and just say, 'Hi, I'm Candy.'" So I thought "oh, I could do better than that." I looked at her and said, "O.K., you want me to do that?" Then this is what I'll do. "Hi, I'm Candy. Eat Me!" Drag is such a convenient way to say and do whatever you damn well please, which I love! So I started handing out the fliers, and people were wondering who and what I was and scrambling to understand where the fuck I came from. The last name came about when I was hired to dance at Jackie's club inside a go-go box with a strobe light on me and I was in hog heaven! The club was a big hit although it was in an awful part of town. I showed up at 1 a.m. and Jackie was hysterical! I didn't have time to do eyes, I had these big Jackie O sunglasses on, a cigarette holder and I was in this negligee because I wanted to look like I just crawled out of bed and was just fucking just to be retarded. I walked in like *puff, puff*, and Jackie started screaming at me "Candy, you asshole!"

fuck! Where have you been? I was going to call the police, God damn it! Why didn't you call? Were you sick?" And I said, "Listen, Bitch! It's none of your Goddamned business where I was! I just work for you, and don't you ever forget it!" It was the first time I had ever talked back to her in front of a crowd of people, so she screamed as loud as she could, "Candy! You get your candy ass on that podium! Your public is yearning for you!" And I said, "I love you, thank you darling," because I am such a monster when it comes to my head. It's always been big and I've always been an egomaniac.

Isn't calling someone a "candy ass" some type of put down?

I love being known as Candy Ass! People thank to themselves, "Why is this guy doing this? It's obviously a man, but it's a sissy, it's a fairy, it's a fruit, it's a faggot, it's a cliché. I think the term 'candy ass' probably goes way back to World War II. I know they were saying it in the Army. It's a term from those silly little films where they would try to beef up the macho morale of the troupes, and have these sergeants intimidate the recruits by shouting, "Do a hundred pushups, you! Get your candy ass out on that field and run that track!"

Have you ever been propositioned by straight men while in Drag?

When drunk straight men at any one of these clubs approach me and get angry, they'll just be screaming, "What the fuck do you think you're doing? You're not a woman! Look at you!" They bark like dogs, but I just go in for the kill because when you're in Drag, you can get away with bloody murder! When those nails grab any straight man around the waist or on the shoulder, they become docile puppies. I have it so down, it's scary! Eva Destruction and I were dancing at some straight club and we were the only Drags there. Eva will go out and loves to pass for real, but I don't get off on that. He has those mastectomy titties which I think are so amazing! Those tits cost \$1,000! You get what you pay for, baby. He can just jiggle them and it floors me how he can get that huge cock of his tied between his legs! It's amazing how he transforms into this very, very real thing. Anyway, this guy was just staring me down while I was on stage, so I lifted my skirt in his face and said, "Looking for a couple of nuts? You go squirrel!" The guy was simply dumbfounded and even Alexis was wrecked!

I've seen you act in Jackie Beat's plays, but have you done any other professional acting?

I have an agent named Danny who is trying to persuade me to do more. He thinks I have the All-American boy looks and I could do straight commercial stuff. He's sent me out to auditions where I've hated to pretend to be heterosexual, but that is one of my pet peeves. I just deplore that! To me that is a joke, and I don't care how much money is involved. It's just sad and pathetic. I hate closet cases! That's one of the

reasons I did Candy Ass, because I despise seeing closet-case faggots in the media trying to play hot straight leading men, but whatever! That's showbiz, baby. I was working on a film last summer called *Strange Days* where they had hired me to be a go-go Drag performance freak for background scenes at a night club. It was a two week thing and I got my SAG card and they Taft-Hartley'd me. The film came out in October of '95, and Juliet Lewis was it, with Angela Basset and Ralph Fiennes. For Christmas '95, Jim Belushi and Linda Hamilton had a film come out where I was again in a go-go box with Linda Hamilton who acted slutty with me. I'm also going to be in Jackie Beat's *Scream Teen, Scream!* I play Karen Carpenter in the video. When we did the play, I portrayed Karen Carpenter and Sharon Tate, but we decided to take Sharon out of the film because they're back-to-back in the play, and it's good for a stage sort of show, but not for film. It's all in very poor taste, something that Jackie's always been brilliant at, giving audiences a taste of poor taste.

When you're singing with Marble, what kind of music is it?

The guys that back me are adorable, Spanish very young, 19, 21, and 22, and very fresh. Their music is very pop but also punk and very crisp, very much like Elastica. It's a unique, strong sound which I totally dig. I love what they do! It's just so fast and so direct and to the point.

Describe your favorite outfit!

I don't consider myself to be a female illusionist, so that even with my voice, I hate pretending to talk like a girl. I refuse to wear titties and I refuse to tuck my dick. It's what blows people away because they're used to seeing a man who looks so much like a woman that they can really pass, or they're used to seeing monsters who are club kids who do these weird cartoonish space age things. I usually wear a pair of panties, two glamour-length gloves, my platform go-go boots, a little choker and my wig. I like to be all flesh! It's all about flesh! I hate covering my body. When I perform, I always wear something like a bustier or a corset or a glittery skirt. I love the glitter tube tops because I can wear them as skirts and I can just yank them off and wave them and throw them around. When I dance, I have this huge five foot riding whip that I love to hit some of the girls with, or stick it between their legs and just be as vulgar as humanly possible. I never take everything off, but I come damn close. I never wear G-strings because I think they're tacky. I like to bring out a whip or wear chains to get that S/M dominatrix aura about me and bring that vicious sexual energy on stage and into life. I love the whole glam rock era in the early '70s. I know I've been influenced by David Bowie and Marc Almond. I love guys who don't care if they come off like fairies. Marc Bolan from T. Rex is another influence. He was so mysterious, and I love any man or woman that projects such sexual ambiguity.

Where do you shop for your outfits?

Viva Rebecca is a local L.A. designer that's done

a lot of stuff for me. She sells a lot of her stuff out of Playmates in Hollywood, The Pleasure Chest, and Fredrick's of Hollywood. A lot of my stuff is also garage-sale chic and thrift store.

What are some good makeup tips you can give us?

Being Candy Ass also has a lot to do with my face. I know that if you go to any makeup artist in town, they're going to try to soften every little edge and corner to make it very fem, but if you're a man doing Drag, I think you should make your look very stark and high contrast. Make it severe! Black is the most decadent color anyone can use, so I use tons and tons of it. It's all about black, black eyeliner, black lipstick, and black nails. Sometimes I'll use black lip-liner with a deep black cherry lipstick, depending on how I feel. I always wear so much dark makeup anyway that eyebrows don't really matter, so I'd never shave them, but I do shape them a bit at the edges. After all, one must create the perfect Hollywood arch! I will give total Drag/runway model makeup face but keep a total boy body. That's where the confusion lies, and I love that!

Any final thoughts?

I think Drag should be explored from every angle. I just get off on pushing people's buttons and getting people riled up. As Candy Ass, I can demand the attention that I've always craved.

You certainly grabbed ours! Thanks!



It's a Holiday Gay-La!

The Holiday Gay-La is a *faaa*bulous Drag/Christmas Getaway Tour Package put together by Arizonans Ron Carpenter and friends. For the last three years, they have been organizing the gayest, most festive sleep-away parties! Is there a Holiday Gay-La in your future? We sure hope so!

*Deck your heels with gold and glitter
Fa la la la la, la la la la
Scores of Queens will be a-twitter
Fa la la la la la la la la
Don we now our Gay apparel
Fa la la, la la la, la la la
I think I'll go as Carol Merrill
Fa la la la la, la la la la*

Ron Carpenter, his lover Tim, and their roommate Larry are the organizers of special weekend over-nighters called Holiday Gay-La's. They've been attracting singles and couples who've searched for something different, perhaps offbeat to do during those celebratory dog days just after Thanksgiving but just before Christmas. Drag is almost as popular around this time of year as it is for Halloween for this group. The tour package is a real vacation with a decidedly gay slant. For a price too low to mention here, it features full accommodations, catered meals, cocktail parties, dancing, wild entertainment, scantily clad men, glamorous Drag fashions, hangovers (if you're not careful), scavenger hunts, talent shows, tree trimming, photo opportunities, a chance to make new friends and rekindle old relationships, and finally, memories to last a lifetime!

It all takes place the first weekend in December at a beautiful bed and breakfast called The Inn at 410, in Flagstaff, Arizona (that's what the brochure said!). The owners, Howard and Sally Krueger, graciously open their Inn to the group, unlike the reception received by the originals (you know, Joseph and Mary). To add interest and challenge, special costuming and ornaments are suggested as themes, such as 1993's Cheap Jewelry party, 1994's A Christmas of Pride, and finally, last year's A Barbie Christmas.

Some of these girls aren't very pretty, but beauty is not a prerequisite. That's a good thing, according to Ron, judging

from the back issues of Dragazine he's received. Hey!! Looks aside, several stars have emerged, or one could say pawed their way to the top, and they aren't always the ones Ron has expected. As Ron's momma, whom he calls Momma, used to say, "The ones who insist they've never been in pumps and a dress before are usually the ones who have practiced the most." Way to go, Ron's mom! Anyway, the list of past Hall of Flamers includes Holly Lujah (Ron's other half Tim), Sofanda Cox (their roommate Larry), Orna Mint, Aphelia Inmee, Izzy Inyet, Scarlet Fever, Ora Fiss, Mary Nara, Penny Traction, Belie Bottom, Shaleeta Comdog, Eunice Ikel, Amanda Copewith and Ivana Notherman.

As for attire, this is winter time in Arizona, so bring a warm coat and leave the sun block at home. At night, the fashion focus is on smart cocktail dresses and evening gowns, makeup and wigs. In the post-party morning, draggin' Queens don curlers-and-mud-pack ensembles for when focusing becomes mostly theoretical after the previous night's excesses. Other activities include a gag gift exchange, Best Butt and Greatest Girth contests and boxers or briefs bearing Christmas motifs for the eye-popping XXX-Mas Underwear Party segment.

The weekends have come off without a hitch because of good planning, group spirit and a lot of hard work, according to Ron. It also helps that attitudes must be checked at the door. Ron always gives an audible "phew!" when remembering a few narrowly averted disasters, such as the time that one guest thought his boyfriend allowed someone to stick their finger up his butt during the talent show. Well, needless to say that certainly caused a stink.

And then there was the famous centerpiece incident. Since these were not ordinary parties, they couldn't have ordinary decorations, especially the centerpieces

for the dinner tables Ron reached into his twisted creative little mind one year to create the *center-purse*, table decorations consisting of a black patent leather handbags stuffed with Christmas greenery ornaments, ribbons and two tapered candles. These eyecatching little showstoppers were the points of focus on the dinner tables and just seemed to warm up the place. Little did anyone realize just how "warm" they could get. As the night wore on that fateful evening, the only people left awake were sketchy queens, one of which had the bright idea to light the candles in the purses. Apparently, everyone finally retired, neglecting to extinguishing the hot little handbags. It didn't take long before one of the purses was flaming and the smoke alarm was blaring! Ron was even inspired to write a poem about it.

I sprang from my bed with no gown
and no cap,
as twenty-six queens woke up from
their nap
I ran out of the room, my head was
still reeling,
and found flames from the purse
almost reaching the ceiling
I knew then and there what had to be
done -
I was never a fireman (but I once
dated one)

"Yes, it's true," said Ron. "I took that flaming purse as I stood there in the nude and tossed it out the front door like a Lesbian softball pitcher. Meanwhile one of our guests tried to help by bringing water from the kitchen - in a colander! Miraculously, no one was hurt and no damage was done to the Inn. Next time we want atmosphere we'll stick to soft-white bulbs."

Those few mishaps aside, Ron wanted to invite all of *Dragazine's* readers for the next Holiday Gay-La, but because there are only 26 reservations available and past participants get preferential treatment it's probably best to start your own holiday traditions. If you're a glutton for punishment and would like to put yourself on Ron's waiting list anyway, write to Ron Carpenter, 2812 No. 82nd Street, Scottsdale, AZ 85257, and tell them you saw it in *Dragazine*!



THE WHOLE CREW! Boys from San Francisco, Chicago, Louisville, New York, Columbus, New Orleans, Seattle and Phoenix. A big bunch of Twisted Sisters!



Above: Your friendly waitresses Orna Mint, Scarlet Fever, Sofonda Cox and Hollee Luja
Right: Hope Heelcum and Charity Case



MR. DAN & PAUL V.

THE DYNAMIC DRAG DUO BEHIND DRAGSTRIP 66

CLUB PROMOTERS HIT UPON WINNING DRAG FORMULA
Interview by Lois Commondenominator

Dragstrip 66 is a once-a-month Drag-inspired event held in the Silverlake District of Los Angeles. On the second Saturday of each month, Mr. Dan and Paul V. create an environment that is an alternative to the more traditional Drag scenes found in bars and discos. The successful combination of men, music and mascara is due to a number of reasons, but many credit the club promotion team that started it all. On a recent Southern California evening these two "Dragsters" filled in the blanks on the wild world of Dragstrip 66.

Mr. Dan

Paul V.

Tell our readers a little about Dragstrip 66 who might not have heard of it.

Paul: First of all, Dragstrip 66 is not a Drag show. Dragstrip 66 is Dan greeting people at the door, putting on an amazing show, finding other people to be on the stage with him and keeping the crowd laughing and having a good time. And the music... it's about the people, the show and the music. It's not a Drag show.

Dan: We do have a central entertainment portion of the evening and about every other month we have a contest. We try to mix it up, so we don't have a contest every month, although some people show up and ask what time the contest is and what do they get if they win. I always have a prize to give people even if there isn't a contest that night, however.

P: When we started it, it was more of an underground thing. In this time period of over three years now, it's no longer something that only the Queer community does. It's no longer as decadent as it was.

Tell me about yourselves. Let's start with Mr. Dan!

D: I have a major in theater and a minor headache! That was so long ago! What has influenced me most was doing children's theater actually. We used to go on tour. There were two actors playing all the parts. We'd go to grade schools and junior highs. I did it for five years! I've been doing theater in general since I was in second grade. School plays and that sort of thing.

How about you, Paul?

P: I'm a college drop-out. I spent two years of college sleeping while I wanted to be a deejay. I started deejaying when I was 18 while I was in Boston. Boston was home from 1980 through 1988, and I worked at a radio station volunteering my time just to be around it and in it. When I was in college, I did college radio. In 1988, I came out to Los Angeles to work for Warner

Brothers, which I did for 5 1/2 years in their promotions division. About a year and a half ago, I quit that to do rock band promotion and Dragstrip 66 full-time.

Where did the idea of Dragstrip 66 come from?

D: Before Dragstrip 66, we were promoting other clubs. In the very beginning, Paul talked about wanting to do a club and wanted me to do it with him. We wanted to do something different. I was with a friend and we were talking about old games, and the idea of the old game Mystery Date was blurted out. So I picked up the phone and told Paul that we must do a club called Mystery Date! It was all about our childhood really. It celebrated the collective consciousness of our generation. Our first Mystery Date was the Marcia Brady Look-alike Contest. The original concept of the club was that it would be a video club with a show, and hopefully people would dance afterwards. We did seven or eight parties and they were held at the old Studio One Backlot.

P: It was like an embryo for Dragstrip because there was a different theme every week, mainly classic television or that era type of theme, like David Cassidy's 40th Birthday or Dr. Smith Vs. The Robot. We did a Jetsons one called Sola-Samba-Ramba and for the Flintstones party we elected a Grand Poobah. We did Name That Barbie night and Name That Dick night, where all the answers were some celebrity whose first name was either Barbie or Dick. We did a Jeopardy game night and I also liked the Easy Bake Oven Bake-Off.

D: We had a cake decorating contest with an actual Easy Bake Oven. I did readings for one of the Mystery Dates from this book called "Pot!" I sat everybody down on the dance floor and lit up a joint and passed it around.

P: This was when we moved from the Backlot to Las Estrellas in Hollywood. We worked our

butts off! We put on a club every week! We'd always have giant posters and art work. It got to be grueling. We never really made any money, but there was this core group of twenty people that had to be there, so we kept it going as long as we could.

D: But then we wanted to do another club after six months because we had the itch. We did a club called "Spit" at Woody's Hyperion. It was more of a Rock and Roll Fag Bar with some of the campy elements from Mystery Date but not a lot. Then we did another club called "Papa Boner" at the same place. That turned into a fiasco because the guy who owned Woody's didn't get it.

P: We didn't see eye-to-eye because Woody's had a neighborhood crowd that would come to the bar and get drunk, and we were bringing in our own crowd. The owner thought we weren't mixing well with the locals, but we thought they loved us. We were the only new faces these guys would see all week.

Is Drag still a trend that is growing or is it fading back?

D: I think it's different than in the early 70's. The whole Gay thing was becoming a trend, and you had Bette Midler and Chita Rivera who were big Gay icon stars, but they weren't Gay. Now it's changing because Gay people are creating their own entertainment and making their own movies. We have our own stars and our own clubs, not segregated but separated. The Drag trend may be over in the straight society but you see Drag Queens in every Gay bar now.

P: A lot of Dragstrip 66 Drag Queens were only doing it for Halloween before the club. That's one thing Dragstrip has done. It has allowed people to go out and dress up any night they want.

How do we export this to other cities?

P: They've already stolen it in Boston! No, just

kidding. Actually, check this out! Our friend Chris the keyboard player from Figures On The Beach, is now the head deejay at Man Ray. He created a new club called Dragstrip 95. It's a once a month Drag-themed nightclub. I wonder where they got the idea! Do you know?

D: We just don't want them to use our name. There was a magazine out of San Francisco called Dragstrip too. On the one hand, it's flattering, but I know that when we started doing Dragstrip, we were the first to call Drag Queens 'Dragsters.' I see the term Dragster all the time now being used.

Not everyone has a Paul V. to be their deejay. You've had a very important influence on the style of the club, and the club has been written up partly because of the music that's played.

P: I think the reason why so many people like the music is that it is totally different from the other dance clubs in town. You don't hear Rock and Roll in most Gay clubs, for instance.

Another thing that's fun about Dragstrip 66 is that there's a core group of people that are your fans. Can you name some for us to talk about?

D: Let's start with our Door Staff. There's Sharon Needles, America's Sweetheart, played by Steve Vara. She's six foot something. We always say that she reminds us of that really nice girl that everybody knew in high school that wanted to put out.

You also have Sugar. How did you get her?

D: The last couple of nights that we were doing Mystery Date. Sugar and her brother Larry just moved here with another friend of theirs. They came to the club to see if the deejay whose name they recognized that was being advertised to play at the club was the same someone they knew and lo and behold he was. So we became friends.

P: That's one of the asides about Mystery Date. Ninety percent of the people that are the core of Dragstrip were from the Mystery Date crowd.

D: Miss Sugar was so shy, so unassuming, but when we started doing "Split," Sugar helped us at the door and she was great. When we started to do Dragstrip, we knew she'd be perfect. I find that it is really good to have a real girl take your money at a Drag Queen club because it appears that no one wants to give her attitude since she's the real thing. When I cover for her and sit in the chair, I get attitude from people. I think it's from the performance aspect of the entire evening. That's the whole point. When you give people a theme, like when we did our "Laugh In" theme everybody knows what "Laugh In" is, so they're all going to be doing their versions of characters from the old television show. When they get there, they are like a character in a play, and Dragstrip is the stage. As soon as they arrive they start playing their part. When they see me in the admission chair, they think it's time to play, and some of them will get really harsh.

I'm sure there's potential for stories about individuals that go and work and have fun there.

D: Yes, and then there's Divinity Fudge, played by Darryl Carlton. Divinity Fudge was born on the first night of Dragstrip. She came in looking

fudge colored 'cause that's what she is, and someone said, 'Who's that?', and our pal Oscar said, 'That's Divinity Fudge,' and that was that. Darryl has a new boyfriend, although I guess he's really not new since they've been together for about a year. His real name is Steven, but his Drag name is Babette, and he's the newest member of the door staff and a club performer. Then we have Tom and Clint. Tom usually goes between the door and the deejay booth and he's big and tall. He's well built. Did you notice that all the people we have at the door are big? There's a reason for that, not that we've ever had any trouble, but we never will.

Do the bartenders watch out and make sure people don't get too drunk?

D: I think the people that get too drunk show up at the club half drunk already, because you can only drink so much.

P: I also think the alcohol only enhances a personality that is inclined to fight.

Do you think you're just attracting mellow people?

D: I think they're all sex people. Take Clint for instance. Clint is one of our Door Persons and never wears Drag, but he wears costumes and he wears makeup, and he's really fierce looking. He goes by the name 'The Evil Clint.' He'll wear costumes that go with the theme, but not strictly Drag. For our Hotpants theme, he wore green Saran Wrap that he wrapped around himself to be hot pants. What could be more sexy? We get people who come in couples and we get people who want to end up the other half of a couple by the end of the evening.

P: I think the reason that there's a sex vibe in the air is because people don't plan on it so their guard is down when they get there and they find it. They don't go there with an expectation that they're going to get laid that night, and because of that they end up actually talking to people. Another thing that's great about our crowd is that you can carry on conversations with them, even people you don't know. You can walk around the patio and talk to anybody and you won't get some shit Hollywood attitude. Usually you'll find everyone is very friendly.

Yes, I've even come to the club out of Drag and have had a great time.

D: It helps to be in Drag to have the most fun, although nobody is criticizing anyone for not being in Drag, and if they do, they certainly keep it to themselves. About a year ago, people started saying, 'You know, the Drag Queens should be let in first, so that's why we started this whole membership policy.' But I'm almost ready to break down the line one more time and have three lines. The Drag Queen line, the Member line and the Non-Member line. This way we could get all the Drag Queens in there first. It's a Drag club, but Drag

can't exist in a vacuum - we do have to have voyeurs. I still want to try an all-Drag club where you can't come in unless you're in Drag. Just once, maybe for the next anniversary.

P: We'll help them if they show up in need. We'll have makeup tables and Drag booths, so there will be no excuse.

I've heard of something called First Timer's nights. I think they call them Closet Balls, where Drag Queens help newcomers with their costumes.

D: That sounds like a good idea. If you have a friend who has never done it, dress 'em up and bring 'em down!

What's been the most successful theme?

D: I know you think that there was more Drag in the early days, but I think it ebbs and flows. I can tell that there was a lot of Drag last Saturday night. There were people coming in groups of six and ten with everybody in Drag.

P: The theme that we knew made the club a hit was 'Night of a Zillion Jans.' That was the third one, and it was really working!

Tell us some of the other names of the themes you remember!

P: What was your favorite theme, Lois?

You know what mine was! I came all dressed in gold that night. It was the Zsa Zsa Gabor Vs. Elke Sommer night that I kind of helped to suggest to you. I mentioned how much I loved Elke Sommer, and you put the night on. I also remember the Karen Black Valentine Ball because I met the real Karen Black that night.

P: Do you want to try to name all the themes?

D: We had the Inaugural Ball which was the

LOVE BOAT
Christmas Cruise
Set Sail For Romance
Saturday Evening
December 9, 1995
DRAGSTRIP 66
SATURDAY 12/9/95
21+ 4pm-4am

Hillary and Tipper Look-alike Contest, we had the Karen Black Valentine Ball, Night of a Zillion Jans, Attack of the Living Dead Idols Senior Prom Luau

P: My favorite one and the night when I thought something really cool was happening was the night the Fire Marshals came. That was Vegas in Space. The mood and the feeling and the energy and the people were together. I never felt it before! It was amazing to be harassed and you could just tell they were fucking with our party just because they could. Nobody would take it and everybody stood their ground and the party continued.

Did anybody get to the bottom of that?

D: We don't know, but I actually have my suspicions about what it was, but I really can't say because we can't prove it. We actually think that someone was behind it to generate publicity for us without our permission or our knowledge. People did talk about it for months and months.

P: Then in July we had Hot Pants Sexplosion.

D: Then in August we had Lipstick Avengers, then Dragstrip 666 then Beneath the Valley of the Ultra Ice Queens, then The Flintstones Party, Hippy Chicks with Dicks, Rhinestone Cowgirls, White Trash Christmas, Rock and Roll Drag Bar, Love Hurts, Midnight at the Oasis, Supergirls. I can't remember so many of them. Don't print any of this please!

It shows you how much fun you had and how it's all just a blur! And that White Trash Christmas was also important to me because that was the night that the L.A. Times followed me around, then they cut all my story out and just did a story on Emprai! Whatever! I'm happy for him, because he's the more unusual story. I'm just a garden variety Drag Queen. But you get all types, and that's what I like about Dragstrip. Is that a function of the fact that it's in Silverlake and not in Downtown West Hollywood? Like a neutral corner?

P: Yes, but also part of the fact is that you're stepping outside of yourself to be in this club a little bit. Even the West Hollywood boys that come wouldn't be caught dead in a club like this if it was at Rage, but in Silverlake they're anonymous.

So what is your theory about Drag's popularity?

P: It's a blast! It's always been fun!

D: I think RuPaul is the one Queen that you can look at that made it different. RuPaul made it obvious to people that Drag is not about sexuality, but it is about being sexy. I think because of him a lot of people have been educated. I have to guess that we're not the only people who watch Jerry Springer and Ricki Lake and all the other talk shows. The last three years, you can bet at least once a month they do a show on crossdressing and it sells soap. The thing is that you get a lot of people who come on those shows with different Drag points of view. They bring on the Transvestites who are in it for sexual or psychological reasons, the Drag Queens who are in it for the entertainment thing of it, the Transsexuals

who are obviously not Drag Queens. I think more people understand these differences now.

P: There's also club kids who create a persona and wear wild costumes that are as flamboyant as they can be.

Speaking of kids, do you allow 18 and over, or is it 21?

D: We have a wide range of ages, but it is 21 and over. It's post-Baby Boomer, what I like to call The Brady Kids. Our parents were born during and after World War II, so we were technically born after the Baby Boom was over, and we were all the same age as the Brady Bunch kids when they were on TV the first time.

P: I think they call us 'Tweeners.' We're in between Gen-X and Baby Boomers.

Do you keep all of the articles that you see written about the club? I saw in the L.A. Times listing Dragstrip 666 as one of the top clubs in L.A..

P: We try and save everything. We like it when people write about the club, but we want people to figure out what we're doing and tell others that there's something great going on no one predicted could ever be.

D: We have this rule with the press, and they've been pretty good about it. They cannot print the address, and even better, they cannot print when it is. The first time we got mentioned in Details, it was one paragraph with a half of a quote from me, and we had a line around the block for months after that. That's when the regulars started complaining that they couldn't get into their own club. I don't want to have the type of door where people are told that one can come in but another can't come in. I want everybody who comes to the club to eventually get in.

The parking is also tough. That's why I like getting there early. Say, do you have any good Drag tips?

D: Yes, I do, as a matter of fact. This is my favorite tip, and I got it from Sugar (who is not a Drag Queen.) Outline your lips with a dark pencil, like a brown or a dark, dark, dark brownish red, and then take a lighter red, go over that outline with it, and then fill in all of your lips with the liner pencil, then powder, then put on your lipstick and you never have to put your lipstick on again all night long. It never wears off. And the other thing is using a green or yellow clown grease stick under your eyes or on your beard if you have a heavy beard before you put your base over it. When lights hit your face, it doesn't seep through but instead hits another reflective color. White doesn't work as well for some reason.

P: I have heard that once you're done with your makeup you should spray your face lightly with hair spray. You'll never have to touch your face again. I think it was you that told me that, Lois!

D: It's the alcohol in the hair spray that takes out all the moisture from the makeup and dries it, dryer than your powder can.

Let's talk about your weekly Drag soap opera, The Plush Life! How did that come about?

D: Robert Del Campo who is the eldest son of the

Del Campo family who owns Casita Del Campo restaurant and Rudolph's restaurant where we do Dragstrip, asked us if we wanted to do a gay cabaret club. A friend of ours, Ellie, worked with us in the early days on Mystery Date and always wanted to do a club called Plush. So I thought we'd steal that name, and then I thought we could be the opening act for other acts, so I started doing little skits about a character who's seeing a psychotherapist. Paul became Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein, based on the Barbra Streisand character in 'Prince of Tides,' and I was of course Gina Lotriman. We started doing this thing sitting on two barstools, and the first episode was my having a flashback of my daughter Sharon Needles introducing my family. By the fourth show, we had enough characters worked in and started doing it in real time. It kept getting longer and longer, until finally we became the main act and people were coming to see us. We moved into the basement, and then before you knew it, we had less and less opening acts, and it was just us. We did 78 shows as of this interview!

Was it scripted or improv?

P: The story about where the character was moving along from the beginning of the night to the end of the night in the plot was written, but that was about it.

Who are some of your favorite Drag regulars?

D: Pagan Holiday is one. She was created at Dragstrip. She's always a sight, but never a fright!

Speaking of fright, I told someone I thought they looked frightening the other night, and I think I hurt their feelings.

D: That's O.K. I wish more people were like you who eventually realize that they might have said something that hurt someone. Most people don't think about it twice. Sometimes it's just a full moon.

Do you really notice that full moons bring crazier crowds?

D: Yes, I think it does affect the crowd, and the full moon usually happens around the second week-end of each month, which is when Dragstrip occurs. We've had at least four totally full moon Dragstrips per year on the average.

What celebrities have shown up?

P: Roseanne, Karen Black, Tracy Lords, Steven Baldwin, the girls from L7, Perry Farrell, White Zombie, Thrill Kill Cult, Mink Stole, Holly Woodlawn, Nina Hagen.

D: I heard Roseanne stuck one of our fliers onto the refrigerator on her show, so now I watch the reruns religiously to look for it.

Anything different planned for Dragstrip in 1996?

P: We don't try to look too far ahead because anything's possible. We just hope it keeps going.

Thank you both!

D: Gina sez, "Remember, do Drag, not drugs!"

A Plush Life Primer

-Keeping Up With The Lotrimans & Needles-

A Guide To Who's Who in the Weekly Live Drag Sit-Com World of Mr. Dan & Paul V.'s Long Running Soap Opera

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DRAGSTR P 66



Gina Lotriman lives in the Hollywood Trailer Park and is the proprietress of The Cavern Club. Being a single mother has led her to the brink of madness, triggered her compulsive/addictive behaviors, and made her

'Plush Life' not so plush. This has kept her in psychotherapy for many years and has made Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein a wealthy woman.

Gina met her common-law husband, Rusty Needles, 18 years ago when she hired him to perform black-market plastic surgery. Rusty was arrested for Unlawful Breast Augmentation and thrown into prison before he could finish Gina's surgery, leaving her with only one full-sized breast. During a conjugal visit, Rusty inserted his 'Little Bear' into Gina's 'Cave of Love,' and conceived Sharon, who was born not knowing her real father. Gina raised Sharon the best she could, which ain't saying much, because Gina spent most of her time trying to break into the movies as an actress, unsuccessfully. After 17 years, Rusty was released from prison, only to return a year later when he was caught installing Gina's other breast. Now, Gina and Sharon anxiously await Rusty's return.



Sharon Needles started life with two strikes against her. With an absent father and a mother prone to bouts of Munchausen-By-Proxy-Syndrome, little blue-eyed Sharon has thrived, blossoming into a young lady who, on the eve of her 18th birthday,

has accomplished so much. Touring the U.S. of A. on Lesbopalooza, endorsement contracts for Pepsi and Newport Lights, International recognition as a faith healer and mystic - all this as she enters her Senior year in High School. Will Yale be a priority or will her trailer-trash past continue to tarnish her future? Only one thing is certain: Sharon Needles is a real shot in the arm.



Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein, family counselor and 'Psycho therapist To The Stars,' is the caulking in the cracks of Gina's psyche. Lois has been awarded the Nobel Prize for her research and development of the Portable Light Of

Truth (P.L.O.T.), a psychotherapeutic device which induces a hypnotic state in her patients instantaneously, even on trailer house calls. While Ms. Hymen-Stein is Board Certified, she

can't keep her patients' secrets confidential. Between this and her hideous fashion sense, her sexually compulsive behavior, and her fear of intimacy, Dr. Hymen-Stein doesn't have many real friends left, including Harper Rowe, her ex-best-friend and college roommate.



Harper Rowe was born and raised in Fall River, MA. A distant relative of Lizzie Borden and college chum of Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein, this one-time talk show host owes her downward career spiral to the disastrous

Lotnman/Needles appearance on her television show, Chatterbox. Several schemes later, including a failed Model Agency, a kidnapping to Asia, and a hysterical pregnancy from the evil Throckmorton Summers III, Harper is currently putting the pieces of her shattered life back together in a storefront home with Divinity Fudge.



Divinity Fudge was formerly Sharon Needles' prison matron at the Women's Extension Of The Naughty Children's Home (WENCH). A victim of Canine Olfactory Disorder (C.O.D.), Miss Fudge has the power to smell like a dog

and she sniffed her way into a lesbian love affair with Sharon. Divinity has been the first ever Lesbian-African-American-Prize-Pointing-Queen-Of-The-Universe, sexually assaulted by Rusty Needles, and is presently a stewardess on Air Asia. She is all that, plus dessert. Her favorite thing in the world is K.F.C., and she is currently trying to recruit Sabrah Summers into the lesbian lifestyle.



Sabrah Summers was discovered by Rusty Needles while she was singing in the Leopard Lounge in the Laguardia Airport. It was soon learned that Sabrah and Rusty were redheaded twins, separated in early childhood when Rusty

was adopted by Uncle Neddy Needles, and Sabrah was sent to a Catholic orphanage just outside of Las Vegas. An incident with a nun and a wooden chair-leg caused her to hit the road in search of a home, an audience, and a few male back-up dancers. After a life of shame on the run, Sabrah has recently moved into the trailer with Gina and Sharon, where she hopes the ghosts of her sordid past can never haunt her.



Few authenticated facts are known about the dashing yet mysterious **Throckmorton Summers III**. His high degree of swordsmanship, instinctive whip-handling, and an incredibly fine manner indicates a truly aristocratic

breeding. This world traveler currently resides in one of the most luxurious and glamorous mobile homes in the Hollywood Trailer Park. Being the good neighbor and 'bon vivant' that he is, Throckmorton has never declined the loan of a fine liqueur to any trailer park resident, especially Gina, in her most deepest, darkest moments of despair.



Alicia/Alabaster Beige has always been a people pleaser. Alicia/Al always knew s/he had a purpose in this life, be it Rusty Needles' butt-boy in prison or Gina's brand new cross-dressing friend, who just happens to be gay. S/he

pinches for a love in whatever form it comes. S/he has told more lies about his/her past than Gina has emptied bottles of Absolut, or Sharon has changed jobs. Maybe someday s/he will settle on a single gender and a real career.



Chilly Pott is Sharon Needles' best friend at Hollywood High. Unlike her evil motorcycle-gang-riding twin sister, Honey Pott, Chilly is a goodie two shoes. She feeds the hungry with her allowance, donates

blankets to homeless shelters, and gives her spare change to street trash. That's how she met Sharon. Her gullible nature has gotten her into trouble more than once.



Willhelm VanDerKramp was discharged from the Army due to chronic bed wetting, and he then joined the L.A.P.D. His first and only day on the beat was the first day of the L.A. Riots, where he was hit in the head with a

brick. Willhelm developed Post Riot Inflammation Stress Syndrome (P.R.I.S.S.) and is currently seeking peace and tranquility with the help of Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein.

The Plush Life Cast

Gina Lotriman	Mr. Dan
Rusty Needles	Stuart Bailey
Sharon Needles	Stephen Vara
Dr. Lois Hymen-Stein	Paul V
Harper Rowe	R.W. Ford
Divinity Fudge	Darryl Carlton
Sabrah Summers	Robert Ring
Throckmorton Summers III	Stanley Sheff
Alicia/Alabaster Beige	Enck Waddell
Chilly Pott	John Copeland
Willhelm VanDerKramp	Andy Arzt

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Robert Sanford

CC Rae



*The Stories of
Gary Rogers,
Robert Sanford
and CC Rae*

The Great



Gary Rogers

Impressionists

Some Drag performers discover a path to fame through uncanny impersonations of celebrities. Looking like a celebrity is an obvious requirement for this field. The challenge is not only for a man to look like a woman, which is enough for some audiences and some performers, but to resemble a famous personality on a multiple of levels. Artists who specialize in this form of mimicry must talk, walk, dress, dance, even fidget like the person who's imitation they're aiming to be flattering with. Performers can rise to varying degrees of attention to detail, and that's when Impersonation becomes Impression.

Gary Rogers, Robert Sanford and CC Rae are three examples of performers who have developed their acting talents and excelled at the art of celebrity impression. While each comes from a different background and is known for performing as different celebrities, one thing comes through—they all share the love for the celebrities they re-create...

A C H A T W I T H T H E ' F A B U L O U S '

Phyllis

Robert Sanford Shows Off His Flip Side
with Lois Commondenominator



Robert Sanford dresses up and appears as a Phyllis Diller look-alike around the Southern California area. He has the look and the cackle that only someone named Fang could love. From being the judge of a Wet Jockey Shorts contest to riding down the street on a Gay Pride Parade float, Robert's talents are in constant demand. Where did he get the inspiration? Where does he get the nerve?

We are at the famous French Market Place Restaurant here in West Hollywood, and we are talking to the Fabulous Phyllis aka Robert Sanford. Say hello to your reading public, Robert!

Hello hello!

How on Earth did you become The Fabulous Phyllis?

It began in 1985 in Dallas, Texas. It was about a week before Halloween and I was watching television and there was a Phyllis Diller commercial for Regina Vacuum Broom. I just thought it was the funniest thing! She laughed, and it triggered something inside of me to laugh with her. My roommate asked me to do it again and told me that I sounded just like her. I laughed again and he said 'Girlyna!' That's it! You need to do Phyllis for Halloween. I had no idea what I was going to do for Halloween, so it was all meant to be. We went out to a thrift store and there it was. The wig, the gold booties, a very 60's mod outfit, gloves and cigarette holder and boom! Phyllis was born. So we went out to Cedar Springs which is our main Gay area in Dallas and my friend pushed me to attend one of these costume contests at the Round-Up Saloon. There were literally hundreds of people! I was number 69! My lucky number! I entered this contest and there were some outstanding costumes so I thought I'm never going to get anything. I get up there and there's this bearded Drag Queen hosting the show and she says to the audience: "Well, she may look like Phyllis Diller but can she laugh like Phyllis Diller?" I thought to myself 'this is it! I had to prove myself.' She gave me the microphone and I let out a Phyllis cackle and the roof caved in! Girl, they loved it and I won! The manager came up to me after the contest and asked me if I'd be interested in hosting their Monday night Buns Contest. I said sure! He asked if I had ever done Drag before and I said no. He said not to worry that they'll show me everything I need to know. So I owe it all to those wonderful people at The Round-Up.

Then you started appearing as Phyllis to host events?

Yes, the Monday night Hot Buns Contest was the first one. These boys would stand behind a screen about waist level so their legs and butts were exposed. They were only wearing jock straps and they had little numbers



on each butt. The audience judged each butt by the amount of their applause. I'd do little songs in between.

What was the funniest thing that happened to you while performing as Phyllis?

During one number, still my trademark number today, called 'Lolypop,' I would take a lollipop and stick it in between the cheeks of the boys and start singing, "Lolypop, lolypop, oh jolly, lolypop, lolypop!" They'd bend over and I'd tell them to tighten their hines and clench the lollipops. One boy's butt was so tight, I pulled the lollipop out and the wrapper stayed between the cheeks!

That's hilarious! It must have been a sticky situation. Tell us more about yourself. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Newark, New Jersey, born and raised. When I was three we moved to East Brunswick.

Did you take any special theatrical training in school?

Yes, I took some theater and dance and I have a B.A. in film and media arts.

When did you move to L.A.?

It wasn't until 1985 that I moved to Dallas, Texas, where I lived for five years until 1990. Then in 1990 I moved to L.A. A friend of mine in Dallas told me that when I got to Los Angeles, I should call a local performer named Gender who would show me around. He was and is very sweet and kind to me. He said that he could put me in a show and introduce me to the local gals. It was a show at a night club called Arena and Chi Chi La Rue was hosting it. She scared me when I first laid my eyes on her! He's such a character. But I love her! Anyway, Gender did a live song, Karen Dior lip-synched, then I came out with full comedy. I thought I was dying on stage because no one seemed to pay any attention. They all were talking and chatting with their neighbors and their heads were turned away. I thought I gave it my best shot, then the manager saw me after the show and told me I was fabulous. He invited me to do a one person show at his other club called Circus Disco. My act only consisted of little songs and interacting with the audience, but he thought it would be great! I hosted

a little giveaway they had, sang some songs. Interacted with the crowd and it was a great success.

I've seen you around town at various clubs and more often than not, you show up at Dragstrip 66. Where else do you appear?

I'm a regular on a local public access show called "The Fresca Vinyl Show" with Douglas Lee Long. We rode together in the Gay Pride Parade this year!

Who is Fresca Vinyl?

Fresca Vinyl is a fabulous TV star! She's a doll. Literally. She's actually just a doll! The program is a variety-Gay-comedy-informational-all-around show. They have anything on there from leaders in the Gay community like clergy people to actors, all the way down to your local Drag Queens and even some ordinary people. It's a great show! We also feature Andy Arzt who's a fabulous puppeteer. I'm on every other show just about, depending on everyone's schedules. I was discovered by Doug for the Fresca Vinyl show at the club Flirt which is now gone. I loved club Flirt! It was the Brown Derby of Gay Life in Los Angeles. Great energy, beautiful boys!

Tell us about your beauty regimen as Phyllis! How long does it take for you to get into the whole look?

Start to finish? Technically about a good solid hour and a half. On a good day I could whip her up in an hour. All I do is put all the paint on a roller, and roll it on, or call Sherwin Williams and they'll come out. And I always use Oil of Delay under my foundation!

Did you know how to do it yourself from the beginning?

We. I no. What happened, going back to Dallas, I got all the costumes and everything came together then I thought, Oh my God! The makeup! So my friend took me to his sister's house and she had all this makeup. He was supposed to bring a picture of Phyllis Diller but he never did, so I had to do her from memory. I just remembered her high eyebrows and the blue eye shadow, regular lips and rosy cheeks, a red nose sometimes, and the hair. That wig is a magic wig! It just totally makes her.

It looks as though you've been electrocuted!

That's how I do it! If I'm late for an event, I'll just stick my head outside my car window while driving down the street and shake it with the wig on, then spray.

You really do resemble Phyllis without any surgery. Have you ever met her?

Yes, and I'll tell you something interesting. It wasn't until I met Phyllis in person and stood by her side as Robert that I saw that we really do have the same facial features. The same lines, the same mouth, the same eyes. The one thing that I'd like is for her to see me in Drag, which she hasn't. I think it would be a complement to her, but she's well aware of who I am and what I do. I told her all about it, and she said, "Darling, are

you good?" And I said, "well, I've been told I am." So she said, "If you're good and you're having fun, enjoy it!" She told me further that Jim Bailey started out doing Phyllis Diller, which I did not know. So I got her blessing. I don't use her full name, rather I call myself The Fabulous Phyllis. Of course, it's an image of her, but I always make sure that the image is a good one and never offensive or foul mouthed. That's not comedy. I don't think anyone gets anywhere with a foul mouth except for Don Rickles.

You're not trying to do her act then?

No, but I've had a few people offer to write for me and perhaps I might take them up on it in the future.

Have you ever done other characters?

I've successfully done Sophia from The Golden Girls. I can look like an old lady with glasses and say, "Picture This! 1957! There I was! Sicily!" I've also been told I can do Joan Rivers although I haven't tried, as well as Judy Garland, which I did try at a private party a long time ago. I looked just like her! If anyone's ever caught my show in Laguna at the Boom Boom Room where I was for 2 1/2 years emceeing every Sunday night for the Wet Jockey Short Contest every now and then, I'd rip the wig off and do some Judy.

Has anyone ever come on to you in Drag?

Oh, yes! My advice on that is keep the makeup and the dress on! I made a big mistake! This was back in Dallas. One guy picked me up and he was a cutie! He was a cowboy ooh baby! We came home and he said that he liked me! Well I liked him! There I was in Drag as Phyllis. I didn't understand it yet, but he was coming on to Phyllis not really me. I assumed that Drag Time was over and we were going to get down to business there. I went off to get a little comfortable while he had a cocktail. I melted the face down the drain, jump into the shower quickly, came out in my robe as myself and that blew it. That wasn't what he wanted. He wanted Phyllis!

What's some good advice to new Drag Queens?

Leave the Drag on if some cute cowboy comes on to you! Oh yes, and practice, practice practice that lipsynching! Watch your mouth and form the words but exaggerate your movement.

Well, I've had a wonderful time! Thanks!

PHYLLIS PHOTOS BY SEAN, COURTESY OF O'BOY ARCHIVES

THE QUEEN BEHIND THE QUEEN OF MEAN



Gary Rogers

An Interview with the Famed Leona Helmsley Impersonator
by Lois Commondenominator

Gary Rogers is currently known for his uncanny cabaret act portraying Leona Helmsley, 'The Queen of Mean.' Gary grew up on the East Coast and attended the Maryland Institute College of Art where he studied fashion design and earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. He started doing Drag on stage in the 70's, but only recently created his Leona character. As he performs her, he slips in and out of several of his other characters. We caught up with this slippery character to find out more about the Queen behind 'The Queen of Mean.'

Gary, tell us a little about your background first.

Well, I'm German/Italian/Irish. I grew up in New Jersey, Michigan, and Maryland just outside of Washington, D.C.

How do you describe your act?

I'm a Female Impressionist. When I lip-synched, I called myself a "Female Impressionist in the Art of Record Pantomime." It was on my resume. In the 70's, that's what I did. Nobody worked live then, and it was mainly the gay club circuit. Rarely in the 70's did you work a straight club. It was not what it is today. I was doing it before the movies *Outrageous* and *La Cage Aux Folles* were hits. *La Cage Aux Folles* to me is what brought Drag into the mainstream. *Outrageous* did to a great extent, but not really because all *Outrageous* did was make Craig Russell a big star. It did not put Drag in general into the mainstream. I love Craig Russell. He was my idol.

Who are some of the characters you've done on stage?

Marlyn Monroe, Jayne Mansfield, Peggy Lee, Connie Francis, Judy Garland, and Dolly Parton. For fun, Tallulah Bankhead, Jackie Collins, and Elizabeth Taylor. If we go back to the beginning, I think I was Wilma Flintstone. In the stone age.

How did you get started performing?

I knew nothing about Drag when I moved to New York. A roommate asked me if I had ever seen a Drag show, and I said, "No, what's that?" We went to a show in a club called 'The Alley' in Jackson Heights. That night there was a show with two performers, David Miller and Toya. We walked into the club, and there were three big 24" by 36" black and white posters at the entrance. I asked my roommate, "Why do they have these posters of Barbra Streisand up in here?" And he said, "That's not Barbra Streisand." And I said, "What do you mean, that's not Barbra Streisand?" And he said, "That's David Miller." And I said, "You're kidding! That's not Barbra Streisand?" No, it isn't! That's David Miller, that's who we're going to see tonight." And he said, "Oh, I was blown away."



So you led a protected life before that?

You better believe it. A pristine background. Anyway, I saw the show and I couldn't believe it. I was absolutely flabbergasted, although one thing I did notice was that the lipsynch wasn't perfect, probably because I was taught to be a perfectionist in everything I do. Everything carries over to every aspect of my life, including my father's voice in my head saying, "If you can't do it right, don't do it at all."

Where did the inspiration come from to do Leona Helmsley?

It started actually with my interest in Craig Russell. I never met the man, but I adored him from the time I saw his movie *Outrageous*. I'm just thankful that I was given his address and was able to write to him. He was absolutely wonderful! I had a crush on him. I corresponded with him during the last 10 months of his life. He planted a subliminal seed in me because I told him that I was an entertainer myself, and it made such an impression. I always remembered when ever I talked to him on the phone, I guess he was near a mirror, and he would keep bitching saying, "Oh, I just got everything

fixed all nice and tight, and now I look in the mirror and I look like Leona Helmsley." He was in Canada at the time, and that's where he died, so I guess people knew about Leona all over the place. I kept remembering him saying that remark about Leona Helmsley. Then, in September of 1990, they aired *The Queen of Mean*, a movie made for television starring Suzanne Pleshette as Leona Helmsley. I thought it was such a camp! I knew I could do her for Halloween, so I did her the first time during that Halloween season at a private party. I'd only done lipsynching in New York, and I told Craig that I wanted to use my own voice in my act, and he said, "Just do it!" I didn't do it live while Craig was alive, but I looked the best I ever have as Leona Helmsley on Halloween night of 1990, not knowing that Craig had died the day before. I just had the feeling that his spirit was with me.

You're a very spiritual person.

I am, and I believe I got a message from him in 1992 at the Roosevelt Hotel through an angel.

What was the funniest thing that happened to you when you were on stage?

I was doing Marilyn Monroe and was in the middle of the last number which was *Diamonds*. I guess I thought I was real with only two bobbie pins in that wig of mine and when I got to the part where she throws her head back and goes *Tiffany's*, the wig just went flying off my head!

How funny! Were there famous stars that you've performed in front of?

Back in 1991 I performed at Cesar Romero's birthday party as Leona. It was at Caruso's which doesn't exist anymore. Of course Cesar was there and Anne Jeffries, Buddy Rogers, Rod Taylor and Luis Estevez the designer. In August of '93, I did Tallulah Bankhead at Martha Raye's birthday party. Cesar, Anne, Jeffries, Virginia O'Brien, Bea Arthur, Rose Marie, Jackie Mason and Sergio Franchi were there.

Do you ever do charity events or would you like to plug any charities?

I'd like to mention AmFAR any AIDS-related charities. Because I'm not well known in L.A. yet, no one has asked me to do anything. Years ago in New York when I used to lip-synch, I would do a Muscular Dystrophy fundraiser and every December, I performed for Toys for Tots benefitting a retarded children's home in Greenwich Village. I also performed to raise money to buy bulletproof vests for the police in Greenwich Village.

What do you say to people who think Drag is insulting to women?

Even though I desecrate every one of the women whose voices I impersonate, I love them all and that's something that Craig Russell taught me. He loved all the women he impersonated. In an interview he said that you have to love them first before you can impersonate them. There are other characters I'd love to do. I'd love to do a whole show with Dietrich.

How do you win over a tough audience?

I work harder but that only happened when I was lip-synching. At that time I wasn't used to straight audiences. They're not as loud as a Gay audience could be. In order to get a Gay audience loud, you have to be good because they are more critical than a straight audience. A straight audience is easier to please. They're not jaded. You're going out there as a man dressed as a woman. That fact alone bowls them over when you look real. It's just been my experience that Gays are just more picky. I used to do Judy Garland and if you didn't do it well, you couldn't work in a Gay club.

I was noticing your Judy Garland pictures on your walls. She does some gestures that are her signatures. Can you describe some of her gestures?

One thing she always did was work the microphone cord. She would take that cord and swing it all over, throw it over her shoulder. Most of the time she was probably on mood elevators. God knows, she was taking 47 Ritalins a day when she died, so she was pretty happy. She'd always run her fingers through her hair, she'd would get nervous twitches and put her hand up to her face and do little shakes. You'd really have to study her to see that. She was very energetic. She was like a little dynamo because she was so tiny.

Leona has some special gestures too. She sticks out her tongue a lot, but it's not a Cher tongue thing.

Actually, she wets her lips a lot. Of course, she probably did it only once in an interview that I watched and I exaggerated it. That's my intent, especially when my goal is to make people laugh, to exaggerate to the point where just the gesture alone makes people laugh.

And your eyes are almost closed.

Well, she gives that evil squinty look, like if looks could kill, you wouldn't get up off that floor.

Who was the hardest one to impersonate?

Dolly Parton. I guess my biggest disappointment was that I could impersonate Dolly physically but I couldn't get her voice. I'm proud to say I was the first performer to impersonate Dolly Parton in the New York/New Jersey/Connecticut area, because Gay men didn't

know who Dolly Parton was at that time. She had her own syndicated TV series and I'd fallen in love with her when I was staying at my grandmother's back in 1974. This was long before she crossed over. At that time, my grandmother used to like country music, and she turned on a show called *Pop Goes The Country*, and out comes this woman with a big pile of blond hair, a more than ample hourglass figure squeezed into a black pantsuit with bell bottoms which had been out by then for a few years, and flared sleeves with a rhinestone spiderweb appliqued on, and singing a song called 'Jolene.' I had just woken up and walked out into the living room, and all I did was look at the TV and said "What the hell is that?" At that point, I thought that is totally ridiculous, but I waited to see who it was. Three years later, I discovered that every Saturday morning there was a syndicated show called *Dolly*. I started watching and absolutely fell in love with her. I went out and I bought every record I could find.

How do you become a good Drag Queen?

You have to have a sincere desire. First of all, 'Drag Queen' is too general a term. Do you want to talk about a female impersonator as an entertainer, or someone that just wants to go out dressed as a woman?

Either one, but I think I'm talking about people who just want to have fun with it. If they're going to be a professional entertainer, they have to have the desire, but only certain things can be learned. You have to have a certain talent or flair. If you want to be just a Drag Queen in the crowd, if you don't have the knack for putting it together with the make-up and the look, then ask your friends who do, or go to a professional.

I will! Thanks!



T H E S T O R Y O F



CC Rae

Puttin' on the Glitz

CC Rae is a professional performer who travels around the country for a living, booking his fast-moving brand of Drag pantomime and puppetry into countless bars and clubs. His perseverance and style have allowed him to turn his back on the 9 to 5 routine in order to plunge into performing full-time. Celebrity impersonations in his repertoire include; Barbra Streisand, Pee Wee Herman, the Churchlady, Peg Bundy, Linda Richman and Morticia Addams. How does a home-grown Drag Queen get started, and what's it like on the road? CC Rae explains it all!

My real name is Randy Bouche' and I was born in 1963 in a very small town in Wisconsin. I remember always wanting to be an entertainer. As a kid, I used to run around the living room pretending I was the singer on the record (when we had 45s) and moving my mouth to the words they were singing. I jumped around and danced like I was someone in the movie 'Fame'.

In my teens, I became the leader of the local Youth Club. Every summer, I directed and choreographed a big variety show performance for the local community. In high school, I took some drama and dance classes and eventually got the job of Swing Choir Choreographer.

Looking back, I was a really bad actor and now I realize why. I believe to be a good actor, you have to be comfortable with yourself before you can be comfortable on the stage. I was dealing with realizing that I was gay although other people seemed to know it for years and teased me about it most of my childhood life. I often shied away from ridicule and confrontation. I tried to blend in. It was a very unpleasant stage in my life. I was always worried about what other people thought of me. It was only after I reached the point of being comfortable with myself that I think I went on to become good at acting.

Upon graduation, I moved to Green Bay where I took a nursing job in a mental hospital. In the meantime, I took some dance training at the local university. The realization set in that I had no future as a professional dancer. To prepare for a career in dancing, my training should have started as a child. Local fame would be the next best thing, so I started an amateur dance troupe which performed for fun.

In 1985, I moved to Las Vegas with a lover. He was a dancer and wanted to move to a bigger city where he could get better dance training and job opportunities. It wasn't long before the relationship fell apart and I was alone in a big city with no friends. In 1987, I moved back home to Green Bay.

A weekly lipsync contest had become the rage at my favorite gay club in town. I was anxious to enter and I did so, frequently! I won several con-



tests and went on to win finals. Prizes ranged from \$50 to \$200. A gay club in Appleton, a nearby city, had a similar contest where the finalist received \$300, and eventually the prize money was increased to \$500. I won several of those contests as well.

Eventually I became the emcee, host or guest performer of these contests. That Appleton club hired me to run their shows and even book their entertainment. I soon put together a small group of talents and we traveled around the state performing in front of both gay and straight audiences.

In 1985, I directed and choreographed a small group of my friends in a short routine. We auditioned for an old lipsync television show called 'Puttin' on the Hits.' We were one of the two groups that passed the audition and appeared on the national television show! Although we didn't go on to win any big prizes, I can say I've appeared on national television.

My show didn't always include Drag. It actually started out with comedy and male characters. I decided to attempt Drag only after I saw the attention Drag Queens were getting. I was rather poor

at it in the beginning, but I figured we all have to start somewhere. It took me a while to find the right makeup recipe for me, and I got used to the fact that Drag wasn't going to be easy for me. Eventually I learned enough to do a few pageants and even made it to the 1991 National Miss Gay USA Pageant. I won an outstanding talent award there.

Since I look a lot like Barbra Streisand when I'm in Drag, Barbra was one of my first Drag characters. Then one night, I wore a red wig and people said I looked like Peg Bundy. Bada bing bada boom! Peg was in the act! This year I've added some new characters such as Morticia Addams and Linda Richman from Saturday Night Live (she's like buttah!) The Church Lady has been a long-standing character in my show too, but it's all my original material.

Although my show has a lot of Drag in it, the main focus is on the comedy. It's full of gimmicks, comic timing and puppets. Drag is just the mode I choose to do it in. My puppetry work started when I borrowed a four foot tall puppet from my friend's stuffed animal collection. I took it home and

dressed it up in various wigs, glasses and costumes. I found a duet for the puppet and myself and tried it on an audience, and we were a big hit! The routine developed into a whole segment of life-sized puppets for the show, and it became the show stopper for years to come.

My biggest fear in all of this was talking on the microphone. What would I say? What if it wasn't funny? There was a lot of trial and error. It takes a lot of practice to be a good emcee and even more to be a good stand-up comedian. Well, I suffered through. There were nights when I felt like a big success, and other nights when I totally bombed. In the beginning, if I bombed, I was devastated, but I'm not so thrown by that anymore. I realize that audiences are different and will respond differently. There are other factors too, such as lighting, sound, rude heckling, but there are good days and bad days in any job. Fortunately, there have been many more good days than bad for me.

Before I took my show on the road, I went to Florida and spent four months working in clubs as a special guest. I had the opportunity to work with a lot of beautiful female impersonators. I studied their make-up and hair techniques and everything else that comes with stage Drag.

In 1993 I put together my show and took it on the road. It's been very successful for me. I've learned about business, marketing and traveling. I work in 43 states, traveling alone by car and doing about 75,000 miles a year. I work an average of three to four nights a week and 46 weeks a year.

Each year, I build a new show. I design and record the soundtrack. I write all the material. I do all the booking and promotion. I build all of the life-size puppets. I also do all of the driving. There are weeks when I work 80 hours on things related to the show.

I continue to call Green Bay my home. Green Bay has a population of about 100,000. We have a nice Gay community here with a few Gay bars. I like the fact that I know the majority of my community.

Show business is my only income now. I gave up nursing two years ago when I realized I could make it on my own performing in clubs. In one night on the road, I make what I used to make in two weeks at my nursing job.

I'm not very close with my family. We never really were a tight-knit family to begin with, but coming out of the closet seemed to draw me and my family even further apart. They are very aware of my career, and at times seem very proud of me. Neither my siblings nor my parents have come to see my show. It's the fear of entering a Gay bar. I must say that I have a niece who comes to every one of my shows and watches with pride when I appear at home. I am proud to say she is my niece and has looked past the sexuality issue to see her loving uncle. I love her for it.

I try very hard in my every day life to present a positive image of the Gay community to the straight world. In my previous jobs, I was always giving and caring and a good employee. The fact that I was gay didn't make any difference when it came to the quality of care I provided.

What's in store for the CC Rae Show? I'm thinking of adding a pair of male and female dancers to the show to broaden the appeal of the act to all types of audiences. I'm considering performing half of the show in Drag and half out of Drag. The show will include some high energy dancing and maybe even some erotic touches! I hope you'll catch it, because I think it will be my most unique show yet! Thanks for reading my story!

For Itinerary and Additional Booking Information, write to CC Rae, P.O. Box 161, Green Bay, WI 54305 or call 414-435-6763.



Randy and I only had a second on the phone while he was on the road, so I asked him two questions I knew you'd want to know!

Q: Any Drag Beauty Tips, Randy?

A: Blend, blend, blend! Blend your makeup ladies! There's nothing worse than a harsh makeup line from your chin to behind your ear! Buy a few makeup brushes of different sizes at the beauty supply and experiment with blending different shades of powders for shading and contouring your face after you have first covered your face with your basic base coat.

Q: What about wigs?

A: I think very bright wigs look fake, and very dark wigs bring out your masculine features, so I would suggest to avoid any extreme of color. Wavy and slightly curly styles help to soften features. Use soft, thin wispy bangs on your forehead to cover any receding hairlines and one the sides of your face to hide your sideburns.

*The CC Rae Show is coming to your town!
Here's the latest itinerary for 1996.*

Jan 20 - Wausau, WI "Madhatter," Jan 21 - Champaign, IL "Chester Street," Feb 9 - Jacksonville, FL "3rd Dimension," Feb 11 - Tallahassee, FL "Club Park Ave," Feb 16 - Ft. Meyers, FL "Bottom Line," Feb 17 - Port Richey, FL "B.T.'s," Feb 18 - Orlando, FL "Southern Nights," Feb 23 - Coco Beach, FL "Blondie's," Feb 24 - Dunedin, FL "1470 West," Feb 25 - Orlando, FL "Southern Nights," Mar 1 - Mobile, AL "B-Bob's," Mar 2 - Ft. Walton Beach, FL "Frankley Scarlett's," Mar 7 - Tuscaloosa, AL "Michael's," Mar 14 - Montgomery, AL "HOJON's," Mar 15 & 16 - Huntsville, AL "Vieux Carre," Mar 18 - Athens, GA "Boneshakers," Mar 22 - Albany, GA "Michael's," Mar 23 - Macon, GA "Topaz," Mar 29 - Augusta, GA "Walton Way Station," Mar 30 - Hilton Head, SC "M.J.'s"

From her humble beginnings as a boy
named Harold in Puerto Rico, to the
days when she was Miss Donut of
Amsterdam, New York, 1968, to her
rise as a Warhol superstar, Holly
rekindles fond memories.

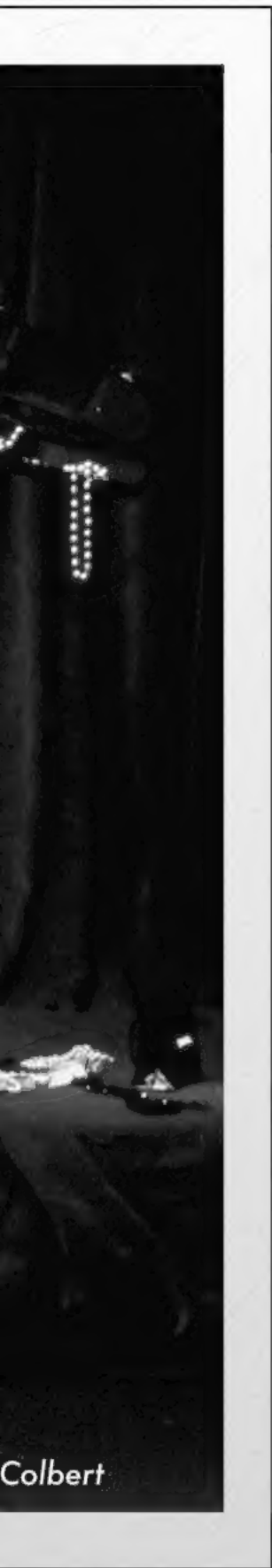


GOOD GOLLY, MISS HOLLY!

Interview with Holly Woodlawn

Holly Woodlawn, famed Warhol "girlette" whose story is recounted in
the hilarious bio *A Low Life in High Heels*, catches up with longtime friend Gino

Photo by Giovanni Jance, courtesy "In The Bag" a documentary about women and their bags to be aired on



Colbert

the Lifetime Channel

For some readers who don't know your story, tell us briefly about your rise to fame.

I thought Andy Warhol was some crazy person. I had my two girlfriends, Candy Darling and Jackie Curtis, and they had just done Andy Warhol's *Flesh* and told me that I should be in one of those movies. I was being quite fabulous and doing speed, dancing on tables at Max's Kansas City club in New York, when Paul Morrissey who directed *Flesh* heard about me and called me up and offered me a part. I was only supposed to do work on it one day. I knew who Joe Dellasandro was, but I was a little uncomfortable. Warhol never appeared on the set. I never met Andy until after I finished the film. When the director George Cukor saw it, he thought that my performance should be nominated. He started a petition for me because at that time no independent productions outside of the big studios were eligible. We didn't qualify, but there were enough people that signed that petition that after that year, it turned things around for qualifying independent films.

Why do you think Andy used Drag Queens in his movies?

He was attracted to Drag Queens because they were beyond women. He wanted to recreate the '30s and '40s glamorous movie star, and at that time, women were not glamorous, but Drag Queens were always glamorous. When I finally met Andy, the first thing he said was "Holly, you're so glamorous!" I didn't play a Drag Queen, I played a woman. There was no explaining it in Andy's movies, and that's why Andy was fabulous. When he made his films, he didn't say, "This is a man playing a woman." He just said this is it. He just got Drag Queens, who were the most glamorous things that were going on. Before us, Ultra Violet and Edie Sedgwick were there in his circle, but then he found us. The Warhol days were fun. We were going to all those parties and getting bombed, and meeting Janice Joplin and Jim Morrissey from the Doors who stuck his tongue down my throat. That's all in the book.

What brought you to L.A.?

Right after Andy died, I had to get out of New York. The funeral was at 10 a.m. at St. Patrick's, and the whole crowd was there. Everyone was coming in limos and all the press and the cameras were there. Yoko was delivering the eulogy, and I thought, mmm, Andy never liked Yoko. And then I heard this scraping sound next to me. It was this woman shoving coke up her nose. I got up and left and went across the street at Saks, bought some make up with \$40 I had in my purse, went home and got a one-way ticket to L.A. I skipped the party afterwards. I just had to save myself from all that stuff. I had been in Los Angeles before when I did a movie called *Scarecrow in A Garden of Cucumbers* - it's in the bible (*A Low Life In High Heels*). I just wanted to go West - it wasn't like I was suicidal, but I had to save myself. I suppose I would have hollowed out a canoe and gone to Hawaii if I didn't settle here. When I came here, I was doing cashier work at a place called Wacko on Melrose. It's like a card store. I did that for 6 months.

How did your autobiography, *A Low Life In High Heels* get written?

I met Jeff Copeland, my writing partner on the book, the first time when he called me up and introduced himself as a producer. I thought he was a big time producer, and he took me to dinner at an inexpensive restaurant named El Coyote! He wanted to write a book, and of course he was flawless and humpy. I thought of writing a book, but I get bored talking about myself. I think I'm boring and dull! The book took 8 months of pure hell. We met every day. I'm a lunatic and Jeff has my sense of humor, but it's not that it's dark or black or maudlin or moody. What I loved about him most of all was that he just kept picking at my head, to the point of where I had to remember, and we tortured each other and made each other work. He wanted to kill me, and he wouldn't talk to me. I'd be on the phone at 3 in the morning telling him I remembered something, and he'd have to be at work early the next day. You know when you find somebody who is your soul mate? He was. We would be at the French Market at 9 o'clock in the morning drinking coffee, and he would have his little pad and pencil, and I would say, "Jeffrey please, not now! Not now!" And he would say, "Holly, can't you remember?" I don't know how it came off! I tried the tape recorder thing, but I couldn't remember anything. There were periods in my life that were completely blank. I said, "Listen honey, you're going to have to move in next door."

Did you have any trouble finding a publisher?

We wrote a proposal, and we had an agent that sent it out to everybody, and nobody wanted it any part of it because they said Oh, no, Andy Warhol! Nobody cares anymore. We sent the first draft to St. Martin's press, and while we were waiting for them, we wrote two other books together. The waiting was awful. St. Martin's wasn't the only publisher that was interested. There were two offers; one said O.K., Jeffrey can be your ghost writer, and the other from St. Martin's Press didn't want Jeffrey but had a better offer. So I told my agent I'm sorry, but I'm sticking with Jeffrey. That day, the *Publisher's Journal* magazine had a review on our proposal, and the reviewer said if the book will be anything like this proposal, she'd recommended anyone out there to spend any amount of money to get it, so St. Martin's upped their offer. I told Jeffrey that I had a better offer from another publisher, but I want to keep him. St. Martin's finally published the book with Jeff after all. As soon as we got an advance, I forced Jeff to buy a computer, and once we got the computer, the book went fast. Jeff types a zillion words a second.

Any movie deals in the works?

I was talking with Miramax, and Gus van Sant was going to be the director. Debbie Mazar was supposed to play me. She's a good friend of mine, and if you don't know her, she played on *L.A. Law* as a New York transplant.

Didn't we hear that Madonna was interested in the project?

Harvey Firestein was going to work on the screenplay, but that didn't work out. I first found

out that Madonna was interested in playing the role of Candy Darling from Harvey, who had dinner with her the night before and pushed the idea to her. I thought, Madonna? O.K., but then 6 months later it was the Candy Darling movie, not the Holly Woodlawn movie. They just wanted the title, and they wanted the rights to the story in perpetuity. The word *perpetuity* stabbed me in the heart. The contract was 20 pages long. I couldn't do sequels. They could sell t-shirts and stuff with my name on them, and I couldn't have made a penny.

Did we see you in a Madonna video?

About a year after that deal fell through, Madonna was trying to do a take-off on a Warhol movie with her *Deeper and Deeper* video, and it was shot in Los Angeles, so my friend Oolo asked if I wanted to be in the video. That's when I met Debbie Mazar. I met Madonna and it was very cordial, very strange, but you hear so much about her and I was really impressed about how nice a person she was. She was in control of everything. She directed that video. It was done very well, very Warholesque.

Who would you like cast as Holly Woodlawn?

I think only a woman can play me. It's not that I don't think a guy could play it, or a Drag Queen. It's that I want it to go to another place. If I can be a woman, why can't a woman be me? I also want Candy Darling to be played by a woman. The only reason I want that is because our heads were there so much that we were women. I'm glad that the deal with Madonna playing her fell through. I can't see her playing Candy. I could see Sharon Stone doing it. Candy was Superwoman. Nobody was more feminine than Candy Darling! Jackie should be played by a man. Jackie never wanted

to be like a woman. The reason he dressed up like a woman was because he would be famous for it in a Warhol film. Candy and I wanted to be women and wives. Candy died of cancer in 1974. She was buried wearing a chiffon gown. Candy lived as a white goddess. Of course, everybody used her. I don't think Andy went to her funeral, but I think he helped pay for it.

What was the funniest thing that happened to you while performing?

It was at the Continental Baths. Everybody worked at the Continental Baths. Most of you know that Bette Midler performed there and used to be accompanied by Barry Manilow on the piano. I was getting my hair done, and I had this humongous wig, and I had this dress that was silver mesh made out of spandex. I was getting my makeup done and my gown was very Carmen Miranda, and somebody gave me a quaalude. I went on stage right between the sweat and the steam. The hair came down, the dress rode up and shrank so much that you saw everything! I was beyond the beyond and felt drunk! I couldn't deliver. I said to the audience, "Do you believe you people paid \$7 to see this shit?" That was the last time I got strung out on stage. After the show, I took the dress off and dove into the pool naked. More recently, I've performed at The Gardenia and The Rose Tattoo here in town. Michael Greer directed me at The Rose Tattoo, and during that show, I would have to open this door and go into this little room and have a costume change, but he forgot to direct the door! I went into the room, and did my change, but couldn't get out! I was screaming and yelling. I'm sure the audience thought it was a part of the act, but it wasn't. That was the last time I used that room or did a cos-

tume change during that run. I'm lucky. I feel very lucky, because for some reason when those horrible things happen to me, when I'm on the high wire without a net, I somehow make it through. One day I was doing a show in 1976, the Bicentennial year, and Jackie Curtis came, and my manager told me I had to sing *God Bless America*. So here I am, singing "from the mountains," and I hear "to the Andes." Jackie is yelling from the audience "Great Gown! Great Gown! Yeah, mamma!"

After my last interview with Dorian Corey that appeared in *Dragazine*, I should ask you - are there any skeletons in your closet?

A lot was edited out of the book, but I don't mind talking about it. When we finally gave St. Martin's press the book, 3 months later we'd send them another book, so it finally got to the point where the publisher, Michael Bennett, said Stop It! We had to edit out things we could not publish about certain persons. That was the main reason I left New York. I had an ad in *Screw* magazine! I was a working girl. That's when I decided to leave New York. I was also doing cocaine and I was a mess, I mean a real mess. I thought those stories were the best part of the book, but the publisher said those parts were just too shocking. I would never name names, otherwise they'll break our knee caps! Football players, baseball players, real famous stars. That's as far as I can go.

What are some of your fondest memories from performing?

I had so much fun doing *The Ritz*, with Casey Donovan as Brick the detective, and me as Google Gomez. I wish they picked that up. I performed at Gypsy's club at 58th and 2nd, because I lived



Excerpt from Holly's fabulous autobiography, "A Low Life In High Heels"

George and Peter felt I was in need of some theatrical culture, and took me to see a play by a Mr. Charles Ludlam. They said it was an experimental piece called *Terdsinelle*. I was very excited about it and envisioned it to be some fabulous Elizabethan drama about somebody - a woman, I presumed - named *Terdsinelle*. Surely it would be something I could savor. Well, there we were in a warehouse-turned-theater watching this play, and I wasn't understanding a goddamned thing that was going on! What was this insanity on the stage? And why was this woman called Black-Eyed Susan ranting and raving while sitting on the toilet bowl? And where was this *Terdsinelle* woman anyway? When I expressed my confusion to Peter, he gave me the queerest look and then laughed. He leaned into my ear and softly whispered a shocking revelation. This play was not about a woman named *Terdsinelle* - it was about *Terds In Hell*!

across the street. I would go there and Gypsy would say that I was in the audience and ask me to sing. Gypsy was wonderful!

What don't you like about performing?

I've been doing cabaret for 10 years, and it doesn't matter how wonderful the place is, or how big it is, you always have to go through a god-damned kitchen! No matter what, you always feel like blech right before you go on. The strangest things have always struck me!

How often do you dress up?

I don't dress up often anymore. Who wants to get up at 7 a.m. and spend hours just to go to the grocery store? I dress when I feel like it, or when they're going to pay. There are times when I love being Holly Woodlawn and being fawned over, though.

Do you use the men's or lady's rest room?

There are times when I get up at 7 in the morning, with no makeup, no nothing, and looking like shit with my hair pulled back, and people say yes ma'am. I don't get it. When I dress as Holly, painted to death and lots of hair, no one has ever called me sir. If I'm at a restaurant and I have to go to the bathroom dressed as Holly, I can see in people's faces they're not sure which way to point me. I go to whichever one is convenient. If you've got to pee, you've got to pee.

Any beauty tips to share with us?

There's only one beauty tip - grease is the answer! Oil and grease. I use olive oil to take off my makeup. Extra virgin because it's less smelly. A lot of moisturizers and grease.

Are you involved with local Drag life at all?

I used to go to Drag Balls in New York and watch - I couldn't believe it. These girls were like stars. They would work for a whole year on a costume for just one night, like Miss Universe. It wasn't in me to do that. I've been here in L.A. 5 years and only now just went to Peanuts the other night. I'm basically very quiet and shy, although no one believes it. The girls are gorgeous! They're all siliconed and tight, but I'm not there anymore. I have to give the kids their time. I wasn't really involved in Drag life in New York either. I was into my own business.

What are you working on now, and what's next for you?

I was on *Birds of Paradise* starring Timothy Bussfield, but it got cancelled. I'm just working on the movie for *A Low Life In High Heels*, trying to produce it, and that's it.

Any last words to *Dragazine's* readers?

I enjoy reading *Dragazine*! It's not a plug - I really do. For *Dragazine's* readers? My only words to anybody out there is - fuck me and let me get on with my career!

Holly Woodlawn Update

Holly has just come back from Big Sur having worked on a new screenplay with producer Jerry Connelly, and the Studios are lining up. Holly can be seen around town teamed up with pianist Wayne Moore in her new cabaret act.



